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THE NEWSPAPER FOR MARGATE, RAMSGATE, BROADSTAIRS AND DISTRICT



Issue No 158
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October 6, 2010

THE CLASSIC PANTOMIME ADVENTURE!

John Thomson

(Cold Feet, Coronation St)

Sid Sloane

(Sid from CBeebies)

Dave Lee

(Local Legend)



Robin Hood

Phil Holden - Ben Langley - Alan Mehdizadeh - Katie Birtill

3rd December 2010 - 16th January 2011



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Robin Hood at the Marlowe Theatre Arena

Please take your seats for our funniest panto ever

Brand new auditorium for Marlowe Arena's audience

EXCITING plans are already under way to bring audiences a fantastic festive treat this Christmas. Top comedy actor John Thomson and CBeebies presenter Sid Sloane will be joining local funnyman Dave Lee in the spectacular family pantomime Robin Hood.

The biggest panto in Kent will be taking place in a brand new version of the Marlowe Theatre Arena, which is still situated in the centre of Canterbury at Kingsmead.

Robin Hood organisers have changed the seating by bringing the stage right out into the audience.

The new layout has far more 'raked' seating than last year and surrounds the stage on three sides, so the entire audience will have an excellent view of this stunning new production.

Producer Emily Wood said: "We listened to the feedback from last year's show and we are absolutely thrilled with the new seating. The audience will be much closer to the stage and they will really feel part of the fun and action."

Director Paul Hendy said: "It's a traditional swashbuckling, action-packed pantomime with lots of comedy and romance. There really is something for everyone."

John will play the evil Sheriff of Nottingham, while Sid is the eponymous hero in green tights.

Robin Hood is at the Marlowe Theatre Arena from Friday, December 3, to Sunday, January 16.

For further details and to book tickets, phone the Marlowe box office on 01227 787787, call in to the Visitor Information Centre in Sun Street, Canterbury, or go to www.newmarlowetheatre.org.uk. Go to www.marlow robinhood.co.uk to see a detailed plan of the auditorium.

ENTERTAINERS: This year's cast are promising a panto you won't forget in a hurry



Sheriff John's finally found his perfect role

COMEDY actor John Thomson is thrilled to be playing the iconic character The Sheriff of Nottingham. He landed the role thanks to his good friend Joe Pasquale, who told John about the Marlowe's reputation for producing some of the best pantomimes in the country.

He is bewildered as to why he hasn't done more panto, saying: "I've got acting and stand-up experience and I tread the line between mainstream and stand-up. I'm also an impersonator."

"I sing a bit and I'm a jack of all trades. I'm made for panto because I have the stand-up, so I know how to work the audience."

"I'm done some theatre, not a massive amount, but enough to know about it. The combination seems perfect for panto, but it never crossed my mind."

His face is instantly recognisable from TV shows like Cold Feet and Coronation Street, but there's more, so much more, to John Thomson's repertoire.

The 41-year-old Mancunian's career spans more than two decades but started while he was still at college voicing the puppets on the satirical show Spitting Image.

After winning the Perrier Award in 1992 with Steve Coogan at the Edinburgh Festival, he went on to work and write with Steve in the Paul Calf Video Diaries: Three Fights, Two Weddings And A Funeral (Bafta winner) and Coogan's Run.

He later played the memorable Joe Beasley and Cheeky Monkey in Knowing Me, Knowing You and pub landlord Ken in Men Behaving Badly. Sticking with his comedy roots, John appeared as a multitude of characters on BBC2's The Fast Show.

Other TV credits include The Smell Of Reeves And Mortimer, The World Of Lee Evans, Murder In Mind, New Street Law and Kingdom.

However, he is probably best remembered for his portrayal of Pete Gifford in the multi-award-winning Cold Feet, for which he was nominated for Best Actor at the Comedy Awards.

Film credits include The English Patient, The Man Who Knew Too Little (with Bill Murray), 24 Hour Party People (reuniting him with Steve Coogan) and The Young Poisoner's Handbook.

Most recently, John could be seen in the new BBC comedy Big Top and on ITV as Jesse Chadwick in Coronation Street.

Last month he appeared in the BBC4 'origins' drama Florizel Street.

John, who is married with two daughters, has also appeared on stage in several productions, including pantomime once before.



PERFECT COMBINATION: John Thomson plays this year's panto villain as the Sheriff of Nottingham

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NIGHT FLIGHTS: THE DEBATE IS TO BEGIN

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CHLOE'S ONE BRAVE GIRL

A selfless teenager has won plaudits for caring for her family.

Chloe Wells, 14, was one of three young people nominated for accolades at the annual Try Angle Awards ceremony. The Ramsgate girl showed courage, maturity and dedication caring for her terminally-ill older sister, who died earlier this year.

Chloe scooped the prize for bravery, having to offer daily support to her younger sister Lily and her father, who is also ill.

• FULL STORY SEE PAGE 3

■ BY TOM BETTS

PEOPLE living under or near the flightpath of Manston airport could have their sleep shattered up to seven times a night if Thanet council supports plans from operator Infratil.

The company's application for a night-time flying policy has gone in to the local authority – and it wants as many as seven aircraft a night to fly in to the airport between 11.30pm and 6am – a period being labelled the 'Night Time Quota Period'.

Up to 1,995 planes could fly in at night during the year, which has been set as an annual limit. The information, produced by Infratil, was submitted to the council late on Tuesday night last week.

The company says the number of planes may not be that many to start with and is being applied for to allow it to press ahead with its expansion plans as set out in the masterplan document, published last year.

The figures have taken more than a year to come into the public domain and are already proving divisive.

A No Night Flights campaign started last year, with the backing of the Stop Manston Expansion Group.

Objectors say it will mean sleepless nights for many thousands in Thanet, as planes loaded with freight fly overhead during the small hours.

Pete Binding, a Ramsgate resident who opposes night flights, said: "Finally it's been

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LEST WE FORGET: Battle of Britain veteran Bob Foster visits the existing memorial wall

Raffle to fund battle centre

■ BY MALCOLM TRIGGS

UNIQUE Battle of Britain memorabilia signed by members of The Few is among prizes being raffled to raise money for a new project at Capel-le-Ferne.

Breitling Aerospace watches featuring the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight are among the many other prizes on offer in the competition, being run by the charity which looks after the cliff-top memorial to the veterans of the 1940 conflict.

KOS Media, publisher of this newspaper, has lent its weight to the memorial trust's efforts to raise funds for a new learning centre at the Capel-le-Ferne site, between Folkestone and Dover.

The KOS Media logo featured on all its publications includes a Spitfire and the white cliffs they flew to defend.

KOS Media's papers have covered events throughout this summer to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

This year has focused attention on the bravery and heroism of the men of the RAF who beat back the Luftwaffe's assault. The trust wants

to use that interest in the bravery of The Few to promote its appeal for £650,000 to build a hi-tech education centre.

With many veterans now well into their nineties, the trust is planning a centre that will give visitors a feel for what it was like to have taken part in the Battle when the veterans themselves can no longer tell the story.

It will use a modern, hands-on approach with video and other effects to bring events to life. The trust is hoping to include a restored dispersal hut as the focus of the centre, which will join the replica Spitfire and Hurricane fighters, the central statue and the memorial wall naming all those who took part in the air war. To support the appeal, KOS Media is urging readers to take part in the raffle.

Visit www.battleofbritainmemorial.org to download a ticket, print it, fill it in and return your completed ticket to: The Battle of Britain Memorial Trust, End of the Battle Grand Draw, PO Box 337, West Malling, Kent ME6 9AA.

Tickets cost £10 each and there is a limit of five per household. Entrants must be aged 16 or over. Closing date for postal applications is October 18 and the draw will be made on October 21 at a fund-raising dinner.

Actors wanted to star in Cinderella

MALE blood is needed for the Winter Garden's Christmas pantomime.

Actors are needed to fill the role of Buttons, Dandini and the Ugly Sisters in Cinderella.

The successful applicants will go on to star alongside Coronation Street's Auntie Pam, Hollyoak's Kate Anthony and Oliver Farnworth in the show.

Auditions will take place on Sunday, October 3, at the Winter Gardens at 2pm.

Candidates should be prepared to sing and bring a backing CD, preferably of two songs (one should be pop), with them.

They will also be expected to dance and perform a page of dialogue, which they will be given on the day.

Enquiries about the auditions or anything else relating to Cinderella should go to Paul Mills at Reach Productions on 01227 275980 or email pevmills@sky.com.

Books needed for hospice bookshop

Pilgrims Hospices are appealing for books to sell in the charity's new Old Bank Bookshop in Margate.

Frances Hall, specialist retail manager, said: "We welcome donations of good-quality books as they are flying off the shelves. All books will be very gratefully received – we have sections for all interests."

If you have books to donate please take them to the bookshop, formerly the old Midland Bank building, in the Parade, or contact Frances Hall on 07967 650911.

There are also opportunities to volunteer, with duties ranging from assisting customers to selling, sorting and displaying goods.

Full training will be provided.

Association to hold talk on Sandwich

THE Isle of Thanet Geographical Association meets on Monday next week (October 11) at 7.30pm.

The group will meet in Park Hall, Pierremont Gardens, Broadstairs.

The speaker for the evening will be Dr FWG Andrews, who will give a talk called The Story of Sandwich.

All are welcome, especially geography students and teachers.

Call 01843 602051 for more details.

Visitor centre's surge in demand

THE Battle of Britain visitor centre is to stay open into the autumn due to a surge of interest caused by this year's anniversary events.

The huge amount of television and media coverage marking 70 years since the struggle means manning the centre beyond the end of this month, when it normally shuts.

The memorial itself is open throughout the year, but those inspired by programmes featuring stars such as David Jason and Ewan McGregor can now continue to find out more about the conflict. The charity which runs the centre has organised extra volunteers to cover for Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays throughout October.

Trust chairman Richard Hunting CBE said: "People can walk on to the site and soak up the atmosphere 365



HONOUR: Tom Belsom and Patrick Beer laid a wreath for their school at the memorial

days a year, but the car park, toilets, souvenirs and refreshments all add to the convenience and enjoyment of visitors.

"We are delighted our volunteers were keen to help us continue to raise awareness of the sacrifice made by the veterans who fought in the

Battle of Britain by staying open for longer this year. We have been overwhelmed by the interest shown. Our Memorial Day in July attracted record-breaking crowds, our website has attracted huge numbers of visitors and the event really has caught the public imagination."

The trust has launched an appeal to raise £650,000 to fund an education centre at the Capel-le-Ferne site.

Mr Hunting said: "We have had a great response so far but still have a long way to go."

The site, which also features replica Spitfire and Hurricane aircraft and the Sir Christopher Foxley-Norris Wall, which lists the names of The Few, is open from 11am-5pm on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays throughout October. The last car park entry is at 4.30pm.

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Young carer's selfless support is recognised

■ BY TOM BETTS

A GIRL who selflessly cared for her terminally-ill sister and provided vital support for her family has been rewarded for her courage and dedication.

Chloe Wells was awarded the 2010 Kent Spirit of Try Angle last week.

The 14-year-old was the overall winner of the award, although there were winners in eight other categories.

The presentation celebrated the most exceptional young people from those who won a Try Angle in their district group earlier this year.

Chloe, from Margate, was presented with an engraved glass trophy by Kent County Council chairman Bill Hayton.

Chloe's older sister, Emily, who was seriously ill, died earlier this year and Chloe had provided a large part of her care.

Her father suffered a stroke and her mother is also ill, meaning Chloe is real support to her family, including her younger sister Lily.

She has been an inspiration to her family, and all this despite the fact Chloe has her own medical difficulties.

Cllr Mike Hill, Kent County council cabinet member for community services, said: "Each year, the Try Angle Awards give incredible young people the recognition and tributes they deserve for their truly inspirational achievements."

"I never fail to be impressed by these young people who work so hard, and I congratulate



CARING SISTER: Young carer Chloe Wells was the overall winner of the Try Angle Awards after caring for her terminally-ill sister and supporting her family, despite her own medical problems

everyone who has received an award at district and county level."

Hundreds of nominations were received for the district awards, recognising those who have overcome personal struggles in their lives and made an important contribution to their local community.

Try Angle was started by a Kent County Council youth worker in 1994 to celebrate the exceptional achievements and good work of young people in Kent and counteract some of

the negative perceptions people have of them.

During the ceremony, there were performances from a number of young people. The record-breaking Jugnu Bhangra Indian Dance Group opened the event and there was an acoustic set by Mark Howard, as well as a performance by the Thanet Steel Band. Annette Tony-Fadipe sang her rendition of Hallelujah.

This year's event was hosted by two young people; Olivia Hunt and chairman of Kent Youth County Council, Dara Farrell.

'It's worse than we thought'

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

published and it's even worse than we thought."

Aircraft with a QC4 rating will not be able to make scheduled flights at night, but that accounts for only a tiny fraction of planes flying in Europe today.

QC4 flights that are late or unscheduled will still be able to land, and many believe the penalty fines proposed in the application for such planes landing are simply not high enough.

A fine of £1,000 will be applied, but fines for planes that take off and arrive from the west would be smaller.

Mr Binding says Infratil has "invented" the Night Time Quota Period to make night-flying hours seem shorter.

He said: "Airlines will gladly pay £1,000 for the right to fly the noisiest planes in the world into the airport at 3am."

The areas most affected by the night flights are Ramsgate, St Nicholas-at-Wade, Monkton and Minster, but there is also likely to be opposition in Herne Bay.

Thanet council will conduct a 12-week consultation on the issue before any decision is taken.

Council leader Bob Bayford said: "We know this is a hugely important issue for local people, which is why we are making these documents available to the public at the earliest opportunity."

"It has been made clear that people want the council's independent assessment of this report available when the consultation starts. That's why the formal consultation process is not beginning immediately."

"Of course, should people want to make their views known before we begin our formal consultation, we'd be happy to receive those."

"That will be followed by a thorough and extensive consultation."

The start date of the consultation will be announced by the council soon.

Lay your single down at studio

PIE Factory Music will host a two-day open-house event this month.

The free recording sessions, part of Youth Music, are held at 67a Chapel Road, Ramsgate, from 11am to 4pm on October 28-29.

They are for children and young people aged up to 18.

A spokesman said: "We will also be offering an amazing opportunity to record your own track."

"Our professional recording studio will be open both days, for 30-minute bookings, when you can record any song you like, with a backing track."

The person behind the best track recorded over the two days will win an iPod Shuffle.

To book a session, go to www.piefactorymusic.com or phone 01843 596777.

Noise monitor

WE would like to clarify that councillor Chris Wells, Thanet council's cabinet member for the environment, does not condone the placing of a mobile noise monitor in an Infratil employee's garden.

Cllr Wells was concerned our story two weeks ago about a meeting of the Kent International Airport Consultative Committee may have caused readers to believe he approved of the monitor being placed there.

We are happy to clarify Cllr Wells's position.

Isle facing crisis as personal debt rises

THE isle is one of the worst places in the country for personal debt.

The latest figures released by the Government Insolvency Service put the isle high up the list for the number of people who declared themselves bankrupt.

The new statistics show that 467 people in Thanet were declared bankrupt or had debt relief orders (DROs) granted in 2009.

This makes Thanet the 14th most indebted local council area in England, alongside locations in the north east, such as Blyth Valley, Easington, and former prime minister Tony Blair's constituency of Sedgefield and the Wear Valley.

Thanet Citizens Advice's Ian Driver said: "Sadly these figures are not surprising. We are processing at least three debt relief orders every week and advising many other people about bankruptcy."

"The forthcoming package of government spending cuts and the review of benefit entitlement rules are likely to make a bad situation even worse. More and more people will begin to struggle and be forced to opt for bankruptcy and DROs as a way to deal with their crippling debts."

Mr Driver said the high number

was putting a strain on the CAB's resources.

"I'm extremely worried about how we can continue to provide a service for the growing number of people asking for our help."

"Our specialist debt advisers are working full out and are booked solid for the next four weeks. It's heart-breaking not to be able to provide immediate help to people in very desperate situations."

Mr Driver said: "Times are getting tough. I'm reviewing our budget and it looks as though I might have to reduce staff and volunteer hours and cut back services, at a time when demand is growing faster than ever before."

"I wrote to Prime Minister David Cameron nearly a month ago inviting him to visit our office and see for himself how difficult things are getting for many people in Thanet. I also asked council leader Bob Bayford and our MPs Roger Gale and Laura Sandys to support my invitation."

"I'm very disappointed that none of them has got back to me yet. Surely this is a time for politicians and community organisations to unite together to lobby for a better deal for the people of Thanet."

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TOP FLIGHT: Flt Sgt Terry Gardner leads from the front with the Central Band of the RAF

RAF's CD tribute to 'amazing' Few

AN RAF drum major is paying tribute to his World War Two predecessors by releasing an album in their honour.

Flight Sergeant Terry Gardner, 45, from Margate, is one of 36 members of the Central Band of the RAF hoping to storm the charts with *Reach For The Skies*, their official album of the Battle of Britain, which was released on Monday. Classics such as *Fanfare for the Common Man* and *The Dam Busters March* are included, as well as music-backed versions of Winston Churchill's history-changing wartime speeches *Their Finest Hour* and *Never in the Field of Human Conflict*.

Flt Sgt Gardner, who has served for 27 years in the RAF, is the central figure on the album cover and also appears on a first class stamp commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

"They were amazing," he said of the hundreds of Allied airmen involved in the conflict. "I don't think we will ever have anything like it again."

"I know we go to places like Afghanistan but at least we have time to prepare for it."

"These guys were just doing it day in and day out, going out on three or four sorties a day and not knowing if they would make it back alive. They were absolutely incredible and we all owe them a great deal."

Flt Sgt Gardner has been playing the trom-

■ BY STEVE KNIGHT

bone since the age of six, and signed up to the Central Band shortly after joining the RAF in 1983.

Since that time he has served in Germany and Turkey, while also commanding the musical troops at remembrance services and marches throughout the UK.

Dedicated to all those who fought for their country in the Battle of Britain, the album stormed to the top of Amazon's pre-release chart last month – beating the likes of Eric Clapton and Phil Collins.

"We've released quite a few albums before but usually they've been done off our own backs," said Flt Sgt Gardner. "It's been a long time since we've been asked to do one, but that's what happened when Decca Records approached us. It's been really exciting to get

back into the recording studio." Other tracks featured on the album include *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Pomp and Circumstance* and *Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines*.

"We're the biggest asset the RAF has when it comes to public relations," said Flt Sgt Gardner. "There's no doubt about it."

"People enjoy watching us march and listening to our music at the events we perform at and leave with a positive image of the RAF in mind."



Busy summer for coast rescue crews

THE summer months were beautiful for beach and sun lovers – but also meant the county's lifeboats were fully occupied.

RNLI figures for June, July and August show volunteer crews were scrambled 167 times, down from 197 last year.

Sheerness and Littlestone were the only stations to buck the trend in Kent, with a slight increase in launches.

At Sheerness, launches went from 28 to 35, and at Littlestone, there was a moderate rise from 12 to 14.

Whitstable dropped one to 37; Margate dropped four to 22; Ramsgate fell from 42 to 37; Walmer halved to six; Dover had a good reduction from 35 to 14; and Dungeness was also halved to two.

Andrew Ashton, RNLI divisional inspector, said: "While the overall number

of call-outs for crews is slightly down on last summer, the holiday period continues to be a busy time. Our volunteer lifeboat crews and lifeguards responded to a variety of emergencies – from rescuing people cut off by the tide to stricken divers, canoeists, windsurfers and boats.

"One crew even launched to monitor the area while the controlled explosion of a wartime mine was carried out."

"RNLI volunteers were ready to respond to the call for help no matter what time of day or night and we're very grateful to them for their commitment."

The RNLI offers free year-round safety advice for sea users and beach visitors.

For more information and to help raise funds, visit www.rnli.org.uk or ring 0800 543210.

yourthanet.co.uk
NEWS IN BRIEF

Crimewatch's isle arrest

A MAN described as 'most wanted' by BBC One's *Crimewatch* has been arrested in Broadstairs.

James Cruikshank-Boyes, 55, wanted by police in relation to a rape and indecent assault in Frant, East Sussex, was arrested on the isle shortly after being highlighted in an appeal on the TV show.

Sussex Police's Det Sgt Julie Dow said: "Efforts to trace Cruikshank-Boyes have been in progress since he failed to return to court in 2002 at the start of his trial."

"The TV appeal was initiated and, although Cruikshank-Boyes was using false details, his distinctive appearance resulted in many calls which were acted upon immediately by our Kent Police colleagues and he was arrested at his home address."

Cruikshank-Boyes was due to be transferred to Sussex and scheduled to appear at court in Lewes on Thursday last week.

High winds close festival

STRONG winds hampered the second day of the Margate International Kite Festival on Sunday.

After a successful day of flying on Saturday, the wind played havoc with the programme and led to the festival closing earlier than planned. At 1.45pm organisers called it a day, saying the wind had become "too dangerous".

One kite with a big flag design even came free from its moorings and ended up in the sea.

Margate lifeboat crew retrieved the huge kite, thought to be worth thousands of pounds, and it was brought back to shore.

Benyon back on the hook

FISHERIES minister Richard Benyon has been asked to go back to the drawing board to help commercial fishermen avoid financial ruin.

In August, the Marine Management Organisation increased the allocation of sole for owners of under ten-metre boats in the North Sea after their initial quota ran out.

The reprieve was trumpeted by Mr Benyon at the time, but he is now being told the extra stocks, which were released as part of a swap deal with The Netherlands and Germany, are still not enough.

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Seminar shows off wind-farm benefits

RAMSGATE has played host to a European renewable-energies conference. It was held at the Pegwell Bay Hotel and delegates looked at the opportunities presented by renewable energy such as the offshore wind industry.

A Thanet council spokeswoman said: "It's part of a three-year European Interreg-funded programme called PATCH, which stands for Ports Adapting to Change. The project aims to diversify port operations by developing new maritime activities and markets, and help strengthen cross-border cooperation and efficiency between the ports.

"Ramsgate is one of seven ports in the programme, which also involves Portsmouth and Newhaven, Ostende and Zeebrugge in Belgium, Calais in France and Zeeland Seaports in the Netherlands."

Roger Latchford, Thanet council's cabinet member for regeneration and economic development, said: "This was an excellent opportunity to showcase Ramsgate, as we're now one of the leading ports assisting the wind farm industry.

"It gave those attending the chance to see the good practice going on as part of the PATCH project, and to see opportunities for future growth."

Hop along for jazz

THE Original Foot Spasm Rabbit Band play in Birchington this weekend.

The show is part of a jazz night in aid of raising funds for Birchington Bowls Club and will take place at The Centre in Alpha Road, Birchington on Saturday. The music begins at 8pm.

Tickets are available from 01843 840962 or 01843 846974 and cost £10 each.

Let the hurdy-gurdy players entertain you

A MAKER of musical instruments is organising a concert in Ramsgate and holding a masterclass.

Building on the success of the first Ramsgate Buzz event which took place in March, Claire Dugue, Ramsgate's own hurdy-gurdy maker is organising a second.

She will also hold a day of instrumental workshops on Saturday, the same day as the concert featuring renowned musicians.

She said: "I was amazed by the demand for the last event. We were sold out. It was wonderful."

Claire, who lives in Ramsgate, sells her hurdy-gurdies all over the world and has a two-year waiting list for orders, such is the demand.

The hurdy-gurdy produces sound through a wheel being rubbed against its strings.

Jo Tuffs, director of the Broadstairs Folk Week, said: "It's wonderful that instrument makers from Thanet are putting together high-profile events with international performers."

Hurdy-gurdy workshops will run during the day in Claire's studio, the Musical Instruments Studio, Unit 5, St Lawrence industrial estate, Manston Road, Ramsgate.

An evening concert taking place at St Georges Hall, Ramsgate, will feature two world-renowned musicians; Nigel Eaton and Cliff Stapleton, both on hurdy-gurdy.

Nigel Eaton will be giving a rare appearance to perform a range of tunes. He is legendary worldwide and has played over the years with Blowzabella, Jimmy Page and Robert Plant and Loreena McKneivitt, among many others.

Cliff Stapleton will perform with his new

■ BY TOM BETTS

band Angles, a newly-formed trio playing striking melodies on bagpipes, hurdy-gurdy and accordion, creating a distinctive folk groove tinged with blues and jazz.

Nigel and Cliff will also tutor the hurdy-gurdy workshops during the day.

A long-awaited masterclass from Nigel, his first in 12 years, is expected to be attended by musicians from all over Europe. Early booking



IT SOUNDS GOOD: Hurdy-gurdy maker Claire Dugue

is advised to avoid hopefuls being disappointed.

The evening concert begins at 7.30pm in St George's Hall, Broad Street, Ramsgate. Tickets are £10 for adults and £16 for children under-13.

The morning workshop with Cliff Stapleton is £15 and runs from 10am to noon, while Nigel Eaton's workshop is also £15 and also from 10am until noon. Both men will hold afternoon workshops from 2pm-4pm, costing £15.

For more information and bookings, phone Claire Dugue on 01843 588 470 or email mail@claire-dugue.com.

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QUESTION & ANSWER

ALWYN KNIGHT



Q Where have you been and why?

A I have been in the West Bank. My first visit was in 2005 and I have going for two or three months each year since. I have been based mainly in Hebron and in the south Hebron hills – the villages in the southern extremity of the West Bank.

It really is an extraordinary community. It is one of the oldest continuously-inhabited cities in the world. It is a medieval city and many of the houses are 600 to 800 years old. Of course the Ibrahim mosque is a very sacred place for Jews, Muslims and indeed some Christians. It is the traditional burial place of Abraham and Sarah, so it has a very important historic role.

I first went with the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme, which provides accompaniment for Palestinians in six different places in the West Bank and one in Jerusalem as they go about their lives. The only condition is the Palestinians we accompany have to espouse non-violence in their resistance to the Israeli occupation.

Q Why do you accompany Palestinians?

A It means monitoring Israeli checkpoints, accompanying Palestinians, literally, if they have to go into places of danger.

In Hebron we accompanied children going to school who had to run the gauntlet of violent settlers. The idea is that you can offer protec-

tion by your presence, particularly if you belong to the international community with access to the media. People tend to behave better if they know they are being watched.

Q What did you experience in Hebron?

A It is a very deeply divided situation because, under international law, the occupation by Israel of the West Bank is illegal and there is a massive military presence in the West Bank. At every point you confront Israeli tanks, soldiers, aircraft and helicopters.

There is a lot of pressure, uniquely in Hebron, as a lot of Israeli settlers live in the old city. There are about 400 of them protected by perhaps 500 Israeli military. If you are a Palestinian living in the West Bank, you are living under military occupation and martial law applies.

There is a lot of harassment and violence from settlers. Most of the men carry guns and even the children can be quite violent. They think they have a God-given right to be there at the place of Abraham. It can be very daunting for Palestinians.

Q Was it dangerous?

A I have been caught up in violent situations. I have a few scars. The settlers act quite irrationally and with no sense of humanity, particularly in Hebron itself. I was out one day

when settlers appeared, masked and carrying heavy staves. Their intent was to chase Palestinian shepherds. I was there with a colleague and we got caught up in the mêlée. One of the sad outcomes was that the Israelis killed one of the donkeys that was with the shepherds.

Q How did the Palestinians cope?

A With remarkable dignity and with a sense of humour, very often. The vast majority did so with non-violent resistance. They resist the occupation, but few resort to violence.

Q What is the solution?

A There are peace talks under way, again, but no Palestinian I know is holding their breath because both Palestine and Israel are divided societies.

The best hope is that President Obama says enough is enough. America has to put pressure on Israel to withdraw from the occupation. Many Palestinians and Israelis are committed to a peaceful resolution and building bridges between the communities.

• Reverend Knight lives in Tenterden and gave a talk about his experiences to the East Kent Justice For Palestinians group. The next meeting is at 7.30pm tomorrow in St Paul's Church Hall, Church Street, Canterbury, with speaker Julian Brazier MP on the Middle East crisis.

Q & A

Reporter **Jenny Armstrong** speaks to the Reverend Alwyn Knight about his experiences in the occupied West Bank during his work to assist Palestinians go about their daily lives in hugely trying circumstances

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Bishop heralds a fresh phase for new-look school

AN ISLE school that was treated to a £21 million refurbishment has been opened by the Bishop of Dover, the Rt Rev Trevor Willmott.

St George's Church of England Foundation School in Broadstairs boasts vibrant new buildings and refurbished facilities, including a large open-plan 'heart' space with specialist teaching areas.

There are also new science laboratories, a theatre, an open-plan art studio and a four-court sports hall and gymnasium.

The school has also been transformed outside, with new play areas, grassed pitches and even secure cycle storage to encourage students to adopt healthier lifestyles.

All areas of the school are equipped to take advantage of the latest technology.

Ecological

The entire project was developed with sustainable methods of construction and materials to make sure that the school is as energy-efficient as possible.

BY TOM BETTS

Principal Kim Stoner said: "At St George's we are so fortunate that part of our dream has become a reality. We have a fabulous new building which has been designed to raise aspirations and inspire future generations of young people."

Commitment

"We have so many people to thank for their hard work, commitment and dedication to this Building Schools For The Future project, not least of all Kent County Council, Kier and every governor and member of staff who shared the vision and joined us on our journey to ensure success."

Bishop Willmott said: "It was a joy to be invited to share in the celebrations and opening of St George's."

"The opening of the new school is important not only for those who currently and will in the future benefit from the new facilities, but also for the wider community."

"It marks another sign of our shared inten-



GRAND OPENING: The Rt Rev Trevor Willmott and school principal Kim Stoner opened the new St George's school

tion to bring new life, energy and purpose to the communities of Thanet."

Sarah Hohler, KCC cabinet member for children, families and education, said: "The new school will inspire students and teachers for generations to come."

"There are modern facilities with a strong, traditional family ethos which will challenge and develop young people academically and socially."

"As a specialist business and enterprise school, the education today will, I hope, inspire the entrepreneurs of tomorrow."

St George's Church of England is one of 11 Kent schools to benefit from multi-million-pound investment in buildings and ICT facilities provided through the previous government's Building Schools For The Future programme.

This programme has since been slashed by the new Conservative government.

Man burned by hot oil in chip-pan fire

A MAN suffered burns to his hands and arms following a fire at a Birchington home.

Two crews were called to the house in Kings Road just before 11pm on Friday, September 24.

The man, in his late teens, had tried to tackle a fire in his kitchen caused by a pan of oil catching light. He was taken to hospital for treatment.

Margate station manager Mick Smith said: "When the resident realised the pan was alight, he attempted to extinguish the fire by moving it, splashing hot oil over himself in the process."

"As this incident proves, never try to tackle a fire yourself. In the event of a fire, get out, stay out and dial 999."

Asking the price of Tracey Emin's love

A VERSION of Tracey Emin's pink neon artwork I Never Stopping Loving You, which can be seen on Droit House, Margate, is being sold to raise funds for Turner Contemporary Art Trust.

The trust supports organisations to develop the visual arts in Kent and is focusing its activity on supporting the building of Turner Contemporary.

Emin said: "It's a declaration of love for Margate from me. Why go to Brighton for a dirty weekend? Come to Margate."

"I want people to walk along the seafront, hold hands and have a snog and say 'I never stopped loving you'."

For information about the auction on Wednesday and Thursday, October 13-14, visit www.phillipsdeputy.com.

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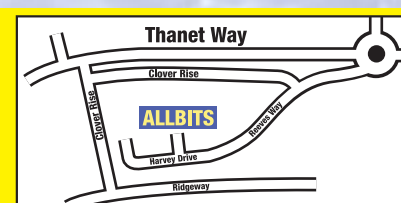
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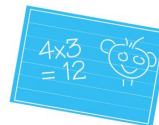
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BREAK TIME

Making the most of activity centre stay

A GROUP of 50 pupils from Ramsgate took part in special activity days at Grosvenor Hall, Ashford.

The year six youngsters from Newington primary took part in a range of activities, exercises and team-building experiences designed to promote healthy exercise and self-confidence.

Facilities included a sports hall, an aquatics centre and an activity park which offers some of the most exciting sessions available.

These include the sky-climb installation, which can cater for an entire school group, a double-power fan, triple zip-wire, climbing and abseiling towers and swings.

Head-teacher Cliff Stokes said: "This was a fantastic opportunity for our children to enjoy one of the top activity centres."

"The school paid for the short residential stay because we felt it would help the party develop a range of skills and also be terrific fun."

You laugh and learn

CHILDREN and their families worked together in a laugh-and-learn fun day at Newington primary school.

Almost 30 families took part in the day-long programme as part of a project to involve them with their children's learning and understand the type of work that pupils do in the classroom.

Among the activities were African djembe drumming, learning through playing, healthy eating and making lunches.

Dramatic Fringe benefits

CLARENDON House drama performances at the first London Fringe Festival were so successful that the Ramsgate school is already planning for next year's event.

Nutmeg Productions, comprising drama and theatre studies students, presented two original works that earned them A* results from examiners in the summer.

The first public performance of the works was at the subterranean cavern of the Phoenix Artists' Club in Tottenham Court Road.

Madeleine Lewis, head of drama and theatre studies at the Federation of Ramsgate Grammar Schools, said: "The achievement of these young actors in creating work of such

■ BY TOM BETTS

professional quality should not be underestimated.

"We were thrilled and proud to be part of the first London Fringe Festival and hope this is the start of work being annually showcased at London Fringe from this department."

Teacher Gabi Magill was among supporters, friends and family who travelled to London for the acclaimed performance debut.

She said: "A Star Shone Bright is a mature piece of visual and challenging theatre that was devised when the members of the four-girl troupe were just 15 years old. It explores oppression, identity and choice and played to a packed audience, earning them rousing applause and a standing ovation."

"Their black-and-white costumes created a blank canvas with which to paint rich images of persecution and cruelty to women at poignant times over the last century: Nazi sterilisation of Jewish women; the one-child rule in China; as well as illegal abortion and the phenomena of pregnancy pacts."

"The second piece, A Sweet Letter From God To Man, was high-energy physical theatre and completely engaging."

"It was devised by three A-level students who wanted to explore themes of global concern and the human condition: the environment, abuse, neglect, the debt crisis, war and violence."

"It was set to a range of powerful and compelling soundtracks which enhanced the strong imagery depicted through their stage status, symmetry and synchronisation."



We're coasting along in aid of MS research

MARGATE students saddled up for a coastal bike ride in aid of research into multiple sclerosis.

Sixth-formers Grant Roswell, Danielle Warrington, Jessica Mills and Beth Addley from Hartsdown Technology College were joined in the 34-mile sponsored ride by staff members Andy Somers (principal), Dave Parker, Tim Cramp, Roger Stone, Martin Convery, Bernadette Searles and Graham Dorkings.

The team raised some £500 for the charity on the sponsored ride along the Viking coastal trail with its spectacular views.

The charity riders are pictured at Margate harbour at the start of their venture.

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Children's homes face new rules



ISLE BENEFIT: Thanet North MP Roger Gale

THE problem of vulnerable youngsters being dumped on the isle, miles away from their home towns, could be coming to an end.

Kent is currently home to almost 1,400 looked-after children, sent to live in the county by local authorities as far away as Manchester, Birmingham and Wales.

Campaigners say the practice puts pressure on local schools and hospitals, while residents say it

■ BY STEVE KNIGHT

can lead to antisocial behaviour.

However, the Government has now announced that regulations restricting out-of-area placements will come into force next April.

Thanet North Tory MP Roger Gale said: "Across Thanet the impact of out-of-area looked-after children has been considerable, placing a huge burden on education, health and policing services.

"I hope that from April we will see a dramatic reduction in young people being dumped in Thanet,

so far from families, friends and schools.

"I believe that we will see a significant benefit quite quickly in this area."

A report compiled by Kent County Council last February revealed that Kent was home to 1,383 young people sent from other local authorities – up 159 from three years ago.

There is a cluster of children's homes in the coastal towns of Deal and Dover, as well as more than 30 across Thanet.

Thanet South Tory MP Laura Sandys was told of the regula-

tions when she met children's minister Tim Loughton.

She said: "I was encouraged by the education department's commitment to ensure London authorities in particular stop sending their looked-after children to Thanet," she said.

"We will be taking steps to compel these authorities to make adequate provision in their own locality for those children."

Ms Sandys added that she would campaign against a proposed care home in Ramsgate, which she says may seek to draw youngsters from outside the area.



ENCOURAGED: Thanet South MP Laura Sandys

Trucker jailed on drugs charge

A LORRY-DRIVER who tried to smuggle cannabis into the country through the Port of Ramsgate has been jailed.

Polish national Leszek Bieszka was locked up for five years and 10 months.

He was stopped by UK Border Agency officers on Friday, June 11.

On board his lorry 215kg of cannabis resin and 228kg of herbal cannabis was discovered. The drugs were hidden inside a load of fresh pasta.

Canterbury Crown Court heard the estimated street value of the drugs was almost £1.3 million, with the cannabis resin valued at £619,000 and herbal cannabis at £656,000.

Bieszka was charged with being know-

ingly concerned in the fraudulent evasion of the prohibition of controlled drugs, contrary to a section of the Customs and Excise Management Act 1979.

Bieszka, 28, had initially withheld his plea but pleaded guilty at a hearing at Canterbury Crown Court on Monday, August 16.

Malcolm Bragg, assistant director of criminal and financial investigations for the UK Border Agency, said: "The UK Border Agency plays a key role in the fight to stop drugs entering the UK and to reduce the harm they do to our communities.

"Anyone with information relating to smuggling is encouraged to contact our hotline on 0800 595000."

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YOUR LETTERS

Farage statement is blowing in the wind

Nigel Farage is, as usual, misguided and misinformed about the growing wind-farm industry (last week's Yourthanet).

He actually believes electricity generated from windpower at night is wasted!

In fact, it adds to UK electricity supplies for all night-time uses. Apart from welcoming Thanet's new role as a hub of the offshore wind industry, he should know that windpower generated about 10 per cent of UK electricity used on September 6, 2010 – a UK record.

And, despite serious under-investment by our governments in recent years, we now have 5GW of installed wind capacity.

Land offshore currently allocated to wind farms will be able to produce electricity to power four million homes, and this is just the beginning.

Mr Farage's opposition to windpower reflects badly on him and his party [UKIP].

More renewable energy of all types, with increased energy efficiency, such as better glazing and insulation, is needed to cut greenhouse-gas emissions which add to climate change.

The scientific academies of 11 major countries, including the UK, India, China, Russia and the US, issued a joint statement back in 2005 indicating that climate change was a major threat to life on Earth and required immediate action.

Mr Farage, like his party, denies that human-induced climate change exists.

However, one of the key UK responses to both climate change and our energy needs is indeed 'blowing in the wind'.

The failure of both coal and nuclear proposals to add to UK energy capacity in recent years, despite Government support, tells us we cannot look to the past for solutions to today's challenges.

Steve Dawe
Kent Green Party

Here's an alternative to the bird-slicers

I find my self in the odd position of agreeing, to a certain extent, with Nigel Farage.

Mr Farage rightly points out the limited scope of windpower and the dangers to marine life and bird life that it presents.

What he doesn't offer is an alternative.

In a modern economy like ours, there will never be a full alternative to centrally-generated power supplies for most of our energy needs.

There is a system that is more efficient, less visually polluting and – within reason – one that puts control of householders' energy consumption in their own hands: Photovoltaic Solar Energy (Solar PVE).

your blogger

Ian MacMillan explains why bankers nowadays aren't what they used to be



GOBSMACKED is a word I was unused to when it made its way into the lexicon of common parlance back in the 90s, but it is a useful word.

I write as someone who worked in banking for 32 years and, indeed, passed all my banking exams and was so well qualified that I was in the top 50 out of 20,000 so qualified in the early 70s. I gained one of only five distinctions awarded in monetary theory.

Then, following deregulation, matters took a turn for the worse.

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The banks' advertising claimed that us lowly bank clerks were experts at everything.

As good at house purchase as any building society, as expert at insurance as any broker. As for wills, we could do it – or pretend to.

'Jack of all trades and master of none' was the appropriate line and, where once bankers had provable expertise, customers were now in the hands of those with the gift of the gab and targets to make to secure bonuses.

Not wishing to be part of this Brave New World, I asked customers for the leaflets they had and, quickly scanning them, knew almost as much as they did.

As I'm in receipt of a pension for doing zilch apart from criticise, I must not bite the hand that feeds me too much – but does anyone remember the Office of Fair Trading's ruling that bank charges were tantamount to theft?

You know, £75 for going overdrawn for a day and, in my

daughter's case, despite having plenty of funds in another account.

And then fat-cat lawyers sided with fat-cat bankers to make this theft quasi-legal. Apart from seething, what can Joe Public do? Well, nothing.

If the OFT is toothless, then there's no hope for little old me and you. And this is where that word gobsomack seems most appropriate.

Yes, the independence of the judiciary is something to be cherished, but the fact that justice is up for sale to the highest bidder is something to be less sanguine about.

I once thought that the average bank clerk was innocent of this negation of ethical behaviour, but I've since changed my mind.

Visiting a bank in Canterbury and waiting to be served, I noticed employees behind screens talking about their holidays and noshing their lunch.

Another one, presumably working, was leaning over one of the said screens and occasionally looking back at those waiting to be served.

Eventually I was seen to and it was something of a contest of contempt. His 'How dare you demand to be served!' against my 'How dare you be so condescending about eventually dealing with a customer!'.

I reckon bankers have adopted a siege mentality akin to those Millwall fans who chant 'No one likes us – we don't care'. And indeed, why should they care? The bankers, I mean.

Immune to the OFT recommendations and enjoying their bonuses, they appear to be able to put two fingers up to the rest of us with impunity.

If there is a story in your area you think we should be covering, contact the editor, **Dave Mairs**, on 01303 817022, or email him on the details above.

If you want to be the next Thanet blogger, then all you have to do is submit an article to us (of about 550 words) and email it to the editor.

And don't forget, for all the latest news and video from your town, log on to www.yourthanet.co.uk.

This converts sunlight to electric power – which can be stored conveniently in batteries and used to feed most of a household's domestic electrical requirements.

Solar PVE panels convert all forms of daylight to electricity – ironically, they work better on cloudy and bright days than in direct sunlight.

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Price is always quoted as the major obstacle, but if governments had spent as much subsidy on solar as they have on wind and if they had included a clause in the 2006 Building Regulations demanding the installation of Solar PVE on new-build housing, costs would have reduced because of economies of scale and we need not have had to suffer a bunch of half-used propellers (or 'bird-slicers', as Mr Farage calls them) off Ramsgate.

Bill Pitt
Former Liberal MP

New life breathed into The Arcadian

I refer to last week's article concerning the accident at the Fort Hotel in Margate.

My company owns the adjoining property of The Arcadian and I would point out that steps have been taken to ensure that access

cannot be gained by members of the public, unlike the Fort Hotel.

I am also pleased to say that The Arcadian will not need to be covered by any giant hoarding as renovation work has commenced and will be finished in good time for the opening of the Turner Contemporary.

Geoffrey Berger
Shiregate (Arcadian)

Still time to add to The Big Donation

I'm writing to thank readers for supporting the British Heart Foundation (BHF) as part of the nation's biggest-ever stock appeal – The Big Donation.

The campaign which ran throughout September aimed to bring in 400,000 bags of stock – the equivalent of £8 million in 30 days.

To its delight, the BHF has been overwhelmed with the support shown by Kent locals.

The shops across the county had an ambitious target of 17,709 bags alone – the equivalent of £354,180 – helping the BHF's fight against heart disease, the UK's biggest killer.

Having had two heart attacks, the BHF has always been a cause very close to me. Last year BHF shops raised more than £22 million, which help fund its life-saving work. Stock really is the lifeblood to its shops, so think twice before hoarding those unwanted items.

There's still time to make your mark on The Big Donation by having a clear-out, filling up a bag and supporting your local shop.

Everyone can help by donating good-quality clothing, shoes, accessories, CDs, DVDs, books, toys and bric-a-brac.

And if you're planning on clearing out your home as well as your wardrobe for The Big Donation, why not organise a FREE collection for that good-quality sofa you no longer need, or drop by your local BHF Furniture and Electrical Store with those unwanted toasters and kettles?

For more information on The Big Donation and the BHF's FREE collection service, visit bhf.org.uk/bigdonation. To find your nearest BHF shop, phone 0844 412 5000.

Paul O'Grady,
comedian and TV presenter

Harbouring a bad feeling over seafront

Ramsgate has a beautiful harbour, the jewel in its crown – the café culture along the seafront with a mix of a working harbour and watching time fly by.

Now the Ramsgate residents are pushed aside with ugly new-builds.

How can the council sell off one of our slipways to a developer?

We don't want a carbuclon on our seafront, the maritime museum in the background (Smeeton's Dry Dock).

Our heritage started in the old Ramsgate town market and the royal harbour.

Why is Ramsgate controlled by so few? Put the residents first!

We just had our seafront stolen off us for flats, while Albion House stands idle. It's a disgrace to all. Hang your heads in shame.

Trevor Shonk
chairman UKIP, Thanet South

Let's clear up that green-space issue

I am grateful for the recent letters from the leader and deputy leader of the Thanet Labour Group making clear their group's position on social housing and green spaces.

To summarise: for green space and against social housing (scrutiny panel); against green space and for social housing (planning committee); for green space and for social housing, but against taking up the £1.7million grant to make it happen (cabinet).

Phew, I'm glad that's all out in the open then – I was really worried people might find the Labour group position a little confusing.

Cllr Chris Wells (Conservative)
Viding ward

It's time for action on ailing waterways

With only 5 per cent of rivers in England and Wales described as being in a pristine condition, the Environment Agency is setting in motion management plans to improve the quality of our waterways.

Our waterways are a valuable resource that supports a range of wildlife. However, they face a variety of pressures including run-off pollution from fertilisers and poorly-designed urban drainage, invasive species like signal crayfish and American mink and low water levels caused by over-abstraction.

We have to do all we can to protect these vital wildlife habitats and ensure people can continue to enjoy them.

River-basin management plans drawn up to tackle these issues are now being put into action.

The South East River Basin District covers more than 10,000 square kilometres and includes eastern Kent, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight and East and West Sussex.

Ninety-nine water bodies – rivers, reservoirs and estuaries – have been prioritised for action between now and 2015.

Kent has a number of water bodies identified for improvement. Parts of the River Darent suffer from diminished fish numbers; the River Medway suffers from diminished invertebrate numbers; and the River Stour suffers from excessive levels of phosphates.

The RSPB, along with other voluntary conservation bodies, is urging the EA to implement the programme urgently and to work with partners to deliver results.

Steve Gilbert
RSPB conservation programme manager

More obese patients opt for weight loss surgery

■ BY MARIJKE COX

THE number of obese people being put forward for weight loss surgery on the NHS has rocketed in Kent over the last three years.

Last year, NHS West Kent referred 115 patients to the Morbid Obesity Single Patient Funding Panel – a massive increase of 203 per cent from 2007-08 – while NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent did the same for 113 patients, an increase of 163 per cent.

Many of those put forward would have been deemed suitable for bariatric (weight loss) surgery including gastric band operations and gastric bypasses, which cost an average of £10,000 per patient.

Nationally, the number has risen from just 238 a decade ago to almost 7,000 in 2008.

However, Maidstone GP and British Medical Association spokesman Dr Paul Hobday said it was inevitable uptake rates of a fairly new procedure would increase dramatically.

"It's only really gone up so much because the figures started from zero," he said. "But there are so many obstacles put in people's way before they are approved – like exercise programmes, dieting and psychologists – that most of the people who get the surgery absolutely deserve it."



NHS trusts in Kent have snubbed recommendations from a national health advisor to pay obese people to lose weight, even though almost a quarter are obese. The National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE), an independent organisation set up by Government to issue health guidance, said incentives such as cash, could be an effective way to help people diet and giving up smoking. But Kent's three primary care trusts have said paying people to lose weight is not the way to tackle Kent and Medway's obesity problem. The NICE report into incentive-driven health schemes, which invites members of the public to give their opinion, is available at www.nice.org.uk.

"From a GP's point of view it's not available enough. It's easy to say people shouldn't eat as much, but the problem needs to be tackled."

Gastric banding involves reducing the size of the stomach by fitting a band around it, while a gastric bypass re-routes food to a small stomach pouch created by surgeons.

A third procedure, used less frequently, removes a portion of the stomach.

Mike Lander, morbid obesity lead commissioner for the South East, said bariatric surgery was a last resort for patients who have been unable to lose weight by conventional means, or who have a body mass index above a certain level.

He added: "Each patient will only be considered if all other ways to lose weight have been tried for at least 12 months."

The figures obtained by KOS Media through a Freedom of Information Act request date back to the establishment of the patient funding panel in July, 2006.

From then to the following March, only 14 people were referred by West Kent and just five by Eastern and Coastal.

Richard D North, a spokesman for right wing think tank the Social Affairs Unit, said it was probably cheaper for overweight people to undergo bariatric surgery than it would be to fund their long-term health problems.

Experts warn of pensions crisis

A PENSIONS panic is on the horizon with the number of Kent workers reaching retirement age set to rise by nearly a fifth.

This year about 32,700 people turned 65 across the county, but that figure is expected to jump to 38,700 by the time the Olympics come to town in 2012.

Four Kent districts – Dartford, Sevenoaks, Canterbury and Maidstone – are all set for increases of more than 20 per cent, with experts warning the cost of paying for so many state pensions will place an even greater strain on public finances.

Across the county the number of pensioners will rise by an estimated 18 per cent.

In an average year about 650,000 people celebrate their 65th birthday, but this is due to rise to 800,000 in 2012 due to the post-war baby boom.

Pensions expert Dr Ros Altmann, director-general of the Folkestone-based Saga group, said: "More and more pensioners are coming through every year and it's something successive Governments have failed to plan for."

Proposals currently being considered by the Government to tackle the problem include bringing forward increases to the state pension age and allowing people to work past it, should they wish to continue earning a full-time wage.

Kent's ageing population is also creating challenges for Kent County Council, which provides a range of services for elderly people including sheltered accommodation and active life projects.

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Kent-Essex crimes unit 'has impact'

KENT Police have lauded the early success of a new serious crime partnership with Essex despite it being 18 months away from being fully operational.

Based in Northfleet, near Gravesend, the Serious Crime Directorate tackles big-league offenders causing problems in both counties such as armed-robbery gangs, drug-smugglers and serial car thieves.

And although the new division will not be fully implemented until April 2012, the man in charge, Kent's Assistant Chief Constable Alan

■ BY STEVE KNIGHT

Pughley, says the early signs are promising. He said: "The message is that the Serious Crime Directorate is having a real impact on the people who cause us the most harm."

"Once all the other departments are finalised, we will be more successful than we already have been in the short time the command structure has been in place."

"To deliver what it has in a period of transition is outstanding. When that transition has finished, we'll be better than ever."

The Kent and Essex forces agreed to team



PROUD: ACC Alan Pughley calls the unit 'outstanding'

up in the new initiative because of the similar problems faced by both, as well as their broadly similar numbers and organisation.

Mr Pughley says that since the beginning of September the directorate has solved 60 offences. These include crimes tackled as part of Operations Pint and Julius, both of which involved London thieves stealing high-value

cars from businesses in Kent and Essex. It makes a huge difference having both forces working side-by-side in the same room on the same problems," said Mr Pughley.

"The new partnership means we can also work with the Metropolitan Police in a much more cohesive way."

Last month Chief Constable Ian Learmonth revealed that Kent Police may lose 1,500 jobs if its budget is cut by 20 per cent in the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), to be published on Wednesday, October 20.

However, Mr Pughley said he was confident the new directorate would escape relatively unscathed.

He said: "We are in a very strong position in that both the Chief Constable and the Kent Police Authority are supportive of such a dedicated unit."

"I think the future is secure but what we've got to make sure of is that we are as efficient and effective as we can be."

"Some of the work done by bringing the two forces together has already allowed us to look at how we can do things differently, and I'm sure as we work through the process we will find other ways to make savings."



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Cholera still threat to UK, says author

DEADLY diseases may still exist in Kentish waters despite having laid dormant for hundreds of years, warns the author of a new book on cholera.

Hundreds of people died when an outbreak of the infection near the Thames in Lambeth, south London, swept through the county in the mid-19th Century.

But despite only 35 cases of cholera having been reported in Europe since 2000, Amanda Thomas – author of the Lambeth Cholera Outbreak of 1848-1849 – is warning that people should not be complacent.

She said: "I'd be very surprised if it still exists in the Thames because of all the cleansing work carried out there, but don't think it's gone away completely."

"I don't think cholera has left our shores so we all need to be very careful. It won't be terrorists or war that kills the human race; it will be some sort of epidemic."

"Washing your hands before you eat and after going to the loo is still very important."

"If your hobby is sailing and you're pulling wet ropes about all day then I would be particular about my hygiene, and I wouldn't advise anyone to go swimming in marinas either."

Cholera is an acute intestinal infection caused by ingestion of food or water contaminated with the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*.

It produces an enterotoxin that causes a painless, watery diarrhoea that can quickly lead to severe dehydration and death if treatment is not promptly given.

In 2007 it was revealed that 90 patients had died at three Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust hospitals following outbreaks of a different disease – *Clostridium difficile* (C diff) – between 2004 and 2006.

At the time, KOS Media launched a hand-hygiene campaign to raise awareness about superbugs and show how everyone can help stop the spread of infection.

Mrs Thomas said she believed the importance of hand-washing first came to the public's attention following the Lambeth cholera outbreak.

She added: "Folklore about washing before tea and after shaking someone's hand probably stems from those outbreaks, because once cholera is digested you can die very quickly."

"The areas worst affected in 1849 were Northfleet and Gravesend. It spread to Medway then right across to Dover in just three months, killing hundreds if not thousands of people. It was very nasty and would have been spoken about for years."

The Lambeth Cholera Outbreak of 1848-49 is available now, priced £37.95 through Amazon.



Amanda Thomas

Picture: RON TAYLOR, HAPPENDA.COM



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DAY & NIGHT

Night in the Shadows

TAKE a musical tour through the career of the Shadows when a top tribute band visits Tenterden.

The Bootleg Shadows return to the Sinden Theatre at 7.30pm on Saturday to perform some of the band's best-loved hits, from Apache to Wonderful Land. Tickets cost £14. To book call 01580 763826 or visit www.sindentheatre.biz.

Classic art on display

ORIGINAL prints by James Barry and his contemporaries are on display at the University of Kent in Canterbury.

Works by Reynolds, Gainsborough, Mortimer and Fuseli can also be seen at Studio 3 Gallery in the Jarman Building from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, until December 17. Admission is free. For details call 01227 827228.

Holby star in concert

A VERY special concert will be held at the parish church at Boughton-under-Blean at 7pm on Saturday.

Holby City star Tish Potter and organist Stuart Neame will perform songs they have played at celebrity weddings.

Tickets are £10/£5 from Boughton Post Office, the Fleur de Lis in Faversham and Judy Collins on 01227 751742.

Jazz moves to theatre

LIVE jazz continues in Folkestone this week with a performance by the Pete Abbott Sound on Thursday.

After moving from The Grand, the weekly Thursday jazz nights can still be enjoyed at the Tower Theatre in Shornecliffe.

To book tickets call 01303 277175.

Supper at brewery

INDULGE in some tasty tipples at Shepherd Neame in Faversham with a traditional Ale Samplers' Supper.

Friday's event includes a tutored tasting, evening tour of the brewery and two-course meal in the Visitor Centre bar. Tickets cost £24.50. To find out more email tours@shepherdneame.co.uk or call 01795 542016.

Teacher sings the blues

BLUES artist Roger Sutcliffe will be appearing at Faversham Folk Club next Wednesday.

The music and geology teacher is also a professional singer and guitarist. He will be playing at the Chimney Boy in Preston Street, Faversham, at 8.30pm.

Admission costs £5 for members, £6 for non-members and is free for under-18s. For details call 01795 536857.

Frankenstein on stage

A MONSTER will be unleashed at the Tower Theatre in Shornecliffe as the FHODS Youth Section presents Frankenstein.

Adapted from Mary Shelley's novel, the macabre and humorous tale is suitable for all ages. Frankenstein runs from Thursday to Saturday. Tickets are £8/£7 from the box office on 01303 223925 or visit www.towertheatrefolkestone.co.uk.

Characters come alive at Anifest

CANTERBURY ANIFEST

Friday, October 8, and Saturday, October 9
Canterbury Christ Church University, Canterbury

GET animated this week when the university hosts this year's celebration of a special art form.

The Canterbury Anifest will be bigger and better than ever, with two days of workshops, talks, screenings and competitions. There will be special guests in the form of dynamic clay duo Wallace and Gromit, along with other celebrities and professionals in the animation field.

The festival is being run by Animate and Create, which was awarded the contract by Canterbury City Council. Based in Whitstable, the company follows in the footsteps of renowned Kent animators Peter Firmin and Oliver Postgate.

Friday is Young People's Day, offering schools and youth groups the chance to learn about the business of animation. They will have opportunities to meet models of Wallace and Gromit and to hear from the creators, Aardman Animations.

Bagpuss and Emily Firmin, daughter of creator Peter Firmin, will be making appearances and the work of local schoolchildren will be showcased too. Students from Spires Academy, Archbishop's School, St Anselm's Catholic School, Barton Court Grammar, Simon Langton Girls Grammar and Community College, Whitstable, have been taking part in the Arts to Animation Project, and their films will be screened on Friday.

Saturday is the main festival day and there is plenty lined up for visitors of all ages to enjoy. The doors at Augustine House open at 10.30am and the first event begins at 11am. Aardman Animations offers a glimpse behind the scenes of Wallace and Gromit's world, when a member of the production crew sheds light on how the award-winning films are made. Tickets cost £5 for adults and £3 for children.

At 12.30pm, children and the young at heart can enter the magical world of The Gruffalo. Julia Donaldson's much-loved children's book was adapted by the BBC and the animated film features the voices of James Corden, Helena Bonham Carter and John Hurt. The film is being given a special screening on Saturday and tickets



cost £5 for adults and £3 for children.

The work of Peter Firmin and Oliver Postgate is celebrated at 2.30pm, when the Children of Small Films – Dan and Stephen Postgate, Emily and Charlotte Firmin – share their memories of growing up around such classic animated characters as Bagpuss and the Clangers.

The event will be introduced by children's television director Martin Goodsmith and tickets cost £5/£3.

At 4pm the entries in the short film competition will be screened, and the awards will be

presented. Entries include On the Water's Edge by Tommaso di Sanctis, An Audience With by David Keefe, Polished Off by David Edgley, Mi'au Myau by Vida Vega, Matter Fisher by David Prosser, Mad Dogs and Englishmen by Daniel Chester, Thursday by Matthias Hoegg, Traumdeutung by Lauri Warsta, Gorge by Thomas Knowler, Paper Daydream by Jun Iwakawa and The Eagleman Stag by Mike Please.

Spend an evening with Phill Jupitus, pictured left, and comedian Emma Kennedy at 7pm, finding out which cartoons make them laugh. Jupitus will discuss his love for Looney Tunes and Kennedy, the author of the Wilma Tenderfoot children's crime series, will reveal her penchant for Bugs Bunny. Tickets cost £10.

Adult day passes cost £25/£20. To book call 01227 769075 or go online at www.thegulbenkian.co.uk.



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THE LITTLE BIG CLUB

Sunday, October 10, Winter Gardens, Margate



SIX popular children's characters appear together on stage for the first time in The Little Big Club.

In this vibrant theatre production, an ensemble of preschool favourites will be appearing to entertain their fans. Packed with music, fun and laughter, The Little Big Club is a great way to introduce children to live theatre in an exciting way.

Bob the Builder, Barney and Friends, Angelina Ballerina, Fireman Sam, Fifi Forget-Me-Not and Pingu will all be making appearances and joining in the fun. The Little Big Club

Band provides the music and encourages the audience to join in with each character when they go on stage.

For the grand finale, all the characters will join together to bring the show to an uplifting close. To find out more about the show, visit the website at www.thelittlebigclub.com.

The 70-minute performance starts at 1pm. Tickets cost £12 for adults, £10 for children and £40 for families of four. To book call the box office on 01843 292795/296111 or visit the website at www.margatewintergardens.co.uk.



KASAI MASAI

Monday, October 11, Gulbenkian Theatre, Canterbury



PERK up your lunchtime with a free concert from world music band, Kasai Masai.

Sponsored by law firm Furley Page, the show is the first in a season of free lunchtime concerts in Canterbury. With their intriguing blend of traditional sounds and contemporary influences, Kasai Masai will brighten up any day.

Taking the ancestral music of remote equatorial African villages, which has been passed down from generation to generation, the band adds its own unique twist to the songs. Percussion and vocals are com-

bined with the Congolese guitar and jazz saxophone to create the distinctive Kasai Masai sound.

Furley Page will be sponsoring three concerts over the coming months. On November 8, the dynamic duo of Mark Eden and Christopher Stell will give guitar renditions of works by Bach and Rodrigo, while the choristers of Canterbury Cathedral will sing on December 6.

The lunchtime concerts start at 1.10pm and there is a suggested donation of £3. To find out more go to the website at www.kent.ac.uk and visit the music page.

RODNEY BEWES - THREE MEN IN A BOAT

Sunday, October 10, Memorial Theatre, Broadstairs



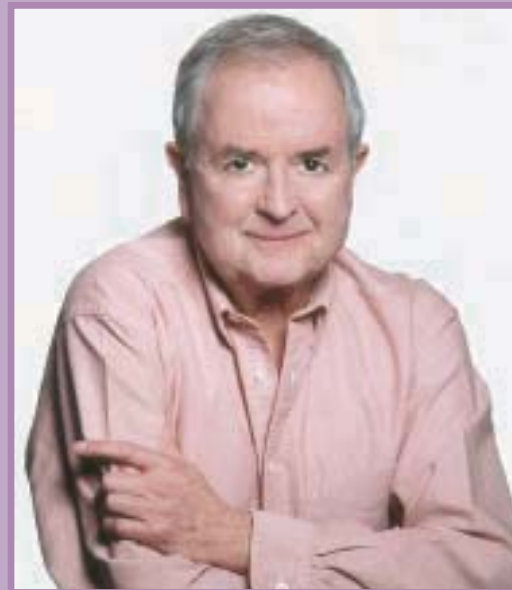
A CLASSIC story of messing about on the river is brought to life by veteran actor Rodney Bewes.

The star of The Likely Lads will be delighting the audience with stories about three friends taking a boating trip up the Thames, in the company of Montmerency the dog. Jerome K Jerome's much-loved book provides the source material for this highly entertaining comedy, performed by one of our greatest comic actors.

When three friends decide to take a holiday together, they settle on a boating trip, but things go wrong from the outset. During the trip they experience various comic scenarios, including the time that Harris manages to get 40 strangers lost in Hampton Court maze.

A big success at this year's Edinburgh Festival, Three Men in a Boat is an enchanting show that demonstrates the talents of both Bewes and Jerome.

The show starts at 6pm and tickets cost £10.50 for Sarah Thorne Theatre Club members and £12.50 for non-members, who must book at least 24 hours in advance. To book call 0845 262 6263 or email info@sarahthorne-theatreclub.co.uk to reserve.



STINA WILSON AND ALEX RIDER

Friday, October 8, Town Hall, Deal



ENJOY the enchanting sounds of flute and harp at the second of the Deal Festival chamber concerts.

Local flautist Stina Wilson will perform with harpist Alex Rider, who is currently on the Masters programme in music at Canterbury Christ Church University.

They will present a varied programme, which includes works by Bach, Donizetti, Antoine Francisque, Alan Hovhaness and Ian Clarke.

Wilson lives in Canterbury, but she has performed throughout the UK, Europe and US. She studied at the Guildhall before moving on to the Paris Conservatoire and the Moscow Conservatoire. She has worked with a number of high-profile orchestras, holding the position of principal flute at Opera North for 17 years.

After studying under Frances Kelly and Gabriella Dall'Olio, Rider moved to Canterbury to continue his studies and has been in high demand as an orchestral and chamber musician. His local appearances have included performing alongside Wilson as part of the Cinque Ports Ensemble concert at last year's festival.

The concert starts at 7.30pm and tickets cost £10 or £18 for two concerts from the Sound House on 01304 381134.



PATRICK MONAHAN

Friday, October 8
Granville Theatre, Ramsgate



COMEDIAN Patrick Monahan will be aiming for the funny bone when he visits Thanet this week.

With a complex cultural background that includes northern, Irish and Iranian elements, Monahan has some interesting influences to draw on. Last year's national tour was so successful that he is back on the road again to win more fans.

Combining his observational comedy with a sharp wit and entertaining audience interaction, he has become highly popular on the live circuit.

Monahan has often been seen on The Paul O'Grady Show on Channel 4 and has sold out a number of runs at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. One critic declared his show to be the best at the festival in 2008 and he has drawn comparisons to Ed Byrne, Adam Bloom and Ross Noble.

He will have support from Alan Seaman, who performs extracts from his show, Shopping and Cooking.

The show starts at 8pm and tickets cost £12/£10. To book call the box office on 01843 591750. To find out more about Patrick Monahan and watch clips of his routines, visit www.patrickmonahan.co.uk.





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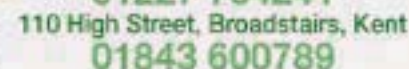
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Fearne Cotton and Holly Willoughby by visit Bluewater! **WIN! a signed copy of their new book**

RADIO 1's Fearne Cotton and Holly Willoughby, most commonly known as the co-presenter on ITV1's This Morning, will be making the very first stop of their limited tour at Waterstones, Bluewater, Europe's leading retail and leisure destination.

The pair will be signing copies of their new book, *The Best Friends' Guide to Life* on Wednesday, October 13, from 5.30pm.

Real life best-friends, Fearne and Holly, share their views, opinions and plenty of funny and personal stories in this aspirational lifestyle guide for women.

Fearne describes how they came up with the idea: "We thought there was a guide missing out there for people around our age or a bit younger, who need advice on different things. I don't think there are any limits for girls these days and that's what this book is all about."



The new book draws on their own experiences in life, love, friendship and work; both are team captains on ITV2 *Celebrity Juice* and each have their own fashion ranges for very.co.uk.

The Best Friends Guide to Life is packed with exclusive photos of the girls (from past to present), lots of which have never been seen before. Plus there is an added bonus of more than 20 exclusive illustrations especially created by Fearne.

For your chance to win one of 15 signed copies of *The Best Friends' Guide to Life*, £16.99, published by Vermilion simply answer the following question:

Q: What TV show is both Holly and Fearne team captains on?

A: I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here

B: ITV2 *Celebrity Juice*

C: Big Brother

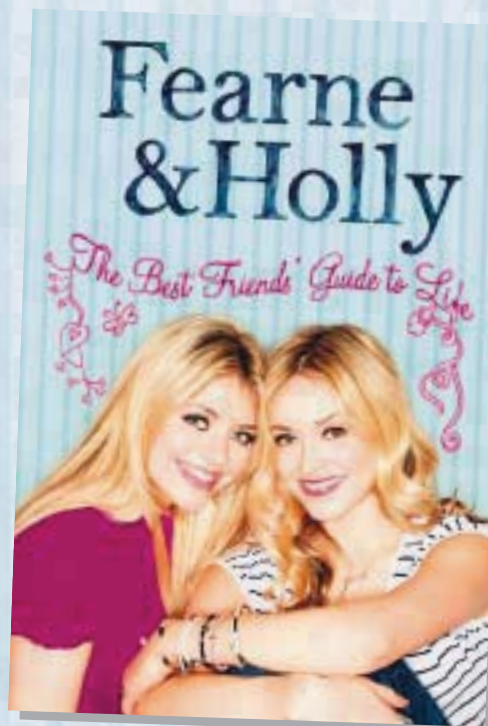
Send your answers on a postcard to Fearne and Holly Competition, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR.

The closing date is Monday, October 11, 2010.

No purchase necessary.

For our full Ts&Cs please visit www.kentnews.co.uk, or for a posted copy call 01303 817073. If you do not wish to receive any literature please write 'no literature' on your entry.

For further information on Waterstones book signings please visit: www.bluewater.co.uk.



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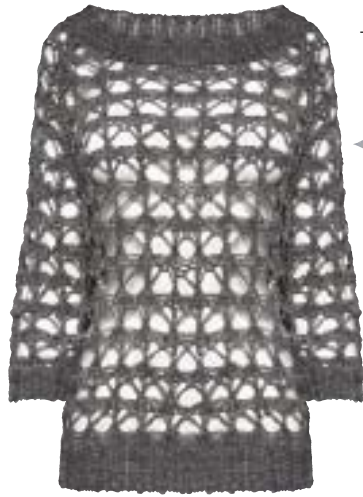
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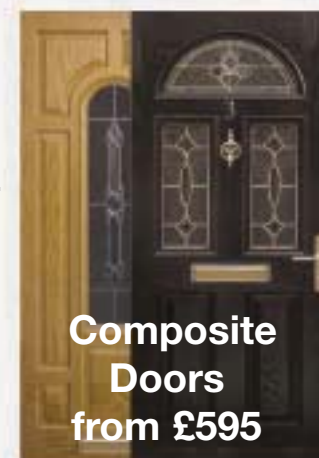
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Oscar hopeful Reynolds goes underground in this dark thriller

■ BY DAMON SMITH

FILM-MAKING is a collaborative process, pooling the creativity and imagination of dozens, sometimes hundreds, of individuals behind of and in front of the cameras.

Rodrigo Cortes's thriller goes back to basics and daringly asks us to invest all of our emotions in just one character who spends the entire film on screen trapped in a single, cramped location.

Not since Sam Rockwell discovered the terrifying secrets of *Moon* or Tom Hanks found himself a *Cast Away* with only a volleyball for company, has the entire weight of a film rested on one actor's shoulders.

Hollywood hunk Ryan Reynolds had a glorious 2009, paired with Sandra Bullock in the romantic comedy *The Proposal*.

Now, he is very much on his own in *Buried*, which traps the actor inside a wooden coffin deep underground for 94 nail-biting minutes.

Cortes doesn't allow his camera to escape from the subterranean prison for a single second – no flashbacks, no fleeting glimpses of the sunshine above the tomb.

Instead, the camera cleverly moves around the space over Reynolds's dirty, sweat-drenched body, lit by the flickers of a cigarette lighter or the beam of a torch.

When darkness occasionally prevails, we can still hear his rapid breathing and his clothes catching on splinters of wood.

Viewers who suffer from claustrophobia should look away...

Truck driver Paul Conroy (Reynolds) is attacked during a convoy run in Iraq and wakes inside a crudely-constructed coffin.

With no obvious way out, Paul discovers a mobile phone with a weak signal and hurriedly calls for help, telling the 911 operator, "I don't know what's going on. I'm buried in a box!"

As anxiety takes hold in the cramped con-



Picture: PA Photo/Icon Film

TRAPPED: Ryan Reynolds is kidnap victim Paul Conroy, the only character seen on screen in *Buried*, which is set in a makeshift coffin deep underground

finer of his prison, Paul discovers that terrorists have placed him in the box and want a five million dollar ransom.

The terrorist leader, Jabir (Jose Luis Garcia-Perez), is adamant: For Paul to see his wife Linda (Samantha Mathis) again, he must pay up.

Dan Brenner (Robert Paterson), an officer trained in hostage negotiation, and trucking company rep Alan Davenport (Stephen Tobolowsky) seem powerless to help.

The prospects look bleak.

Buried wrings every last drop of tension from a simple dramatic set-up, making excellent use of the natural lighting to capture Paul's mounting distress.

There are whispers of a possible Oscar nomination for Reynolds for his overwrought theatrics.

But while he certainly holds our attention, the actor doesn't have the emotional range to take us to the edge with his stricken character

and he doesn't always earn our sympathy, culminating in a skin-crawling interlude involving an unexpected visitor to the box.

Occasional deviations from logic – the final power bar on Paul's mobile phone lasts much longer than expected – feel like a bit of a cheat.

BURIED 
Certificate 15



INSPIRATIONAL: Richard Armstrong as Lucas North, one of the agents in *Spooks*



YOUR TV REVIEW **SPOOKS:** BBC1, 9pm, Monday, **GENIUS:** BBC2, 10pm, Monday

■ BY JENNY ARMSTRONG

ALTHOUGH usually a fan of this high-action spy thriller, the newest series has not lived up to my expectations.

As *Spooks* is a programme with a high character turnover, this is not entirely unexpected. *Spooks*' peaks thus far have been Series 1 and 4. The first series took many by surprise in 2002, with its timely portrayal of MI5 agents battling the forces of evil on British home soil.

Series 4 proved to be eerily prophetic in filming an episode of a terrorist group bombing London just before the real thing happened.

At its best, *Spooks* is full of nail-biting jeopardy, believable plots, inspirational characters and rides the zeitgeist perfectly to bring involving hour-long episodes which would stun any room to silence.

But this season something has

gone wrong. One of the most believable characters, Ros Myers, has gone leaving a very small cast indeed. The first episode was passable, but involved far more unrequited love than a British spy drama needs.

And the second episode was very light on real plot, instead focusing on various agents' questionable loyalties and back stories rather than letting the action and adventure take hold.

The scriptwriters do not do the programme any favours when interpersonal love affairs get in the way of the real queen and country action stuff, which is what anyone who watches a spy show really wants.

There is one character who is still managing to be a proper spy – as yet minor character Dimitri Levendis, an

ex-SBS man who is amusing, relaxed and uncomplicated. Hopefully he will play a more major role in the episodes to come and leave the others to their tortuous intrigues.

TO prevent drivers falling asleep at the wheel, put a wasp in every car. This is one of the many ideas submitted for the new series of *Genius*, in which the eccentric musings of the great British public are given a thorough examination before being judged either genius or barmy. television series and some of the teething problems have been ironed out. It is livelier, more fun, more quirky and less awkward. The only disappointment is that the geniuses who were previously used as judges have been replaced by the comedy personalities that pervade all other television.

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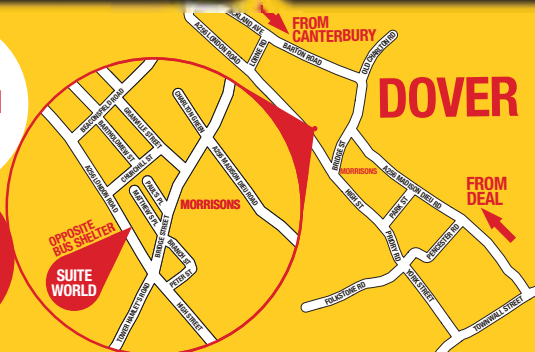
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yourmusic

Synth pop stars to play classics



HUMAN LEAGUE: Philip Oakey, Susan Ann Sulley, and Joanne Catherall

■ BY SIMON ROBINSON

SYNTH pop legends The Human League will play a pre-Christmas gig in Kent.

The 1980s chartoppers will perform at Folkestone Leas Cliff Hall on Monday, December 6.

Fans can expect frontman Philip Oakey and band to get through all their classic hits, including Don't You Want Me, Love Action, The Sound of the Crowd, Mirror Man.

A Leas Hall spokesman said the band, who are currently working on their 10th studio album, were trendsetters.

They said: "Synth pop's first international superstars, the Human League were among the most innovative bands to break into the pop mainstream on a wave of synthesizers and electronic rhythms."

The seafront venue will play host to a number of top musical nights before the big 80s electro throwback, starting on Friday, October 29, with Abba tribute act Abba Mania.

The programme promises a show time of two hours and 15 minutes, giving the band ample time to churn out all of Benny and Bjorn's most popular timeless tracks.

The setlist will no doubt include the likes of Mamma Mia, Voulez Vous, Dancing Queen, The Winner Takes It All, Super Trooper, and many more.

According to the Leas Cliff Hall official website, Abba Mania, accepted as the world's number one touring Abba production, 'celebrates Abba's music in a respectful and enjoyable way'.

Should be a cracking night.

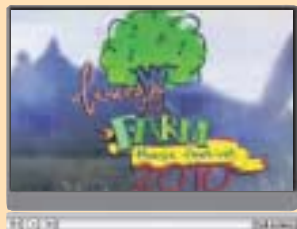
The tribute trend continues on Saturday, October 30, when AC/DC cover band Livewire perform tracks such as To Hell, Thunderstruck and Back In Black.

Support on the night comes from Thin Lizzy tribute act Limehouse Lizzy.

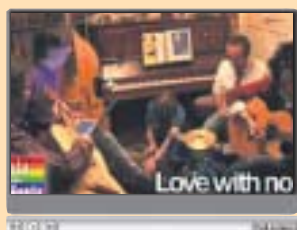
Pop starlet Ellie Goulding will

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MUSIC FESTIVAL: A montage from this year's Lounge on the Farm



BAND PRACTICE: Zinta Egle and her band play Love With No Love



TOP FIVE KENT GIGS

- 1 Flipswitch - 9/10 Maidens Head in Canterbury
- 2 Vivid Nation - 11/10 The Lanterns, Folkestone
- 3 Third Place Victory - 15/10 Westcoast Bar, Margate
- 4 Save Target As - 16/10 Astor Theatre, Deal
- 5 Promise Me Tomorrow - 23/10 The Railway, Deal

be at the Folkestone venue on Wednesday, November 17, as part of her biggest UK tour to date.

The infectious 23-year-old, who shot to fame with the release of her debut album Lights, has enjoyed chart success with breakthrough single Starry Eyes, as well as Guns and Horses, Under the Sheets and The Writer.

Tickets will sell out fast.

For more information on all these nights and to book tickets visit www.leascliffhall.org.uk.



GODDESSES OF THE FLESH: The stunning Diosas de Carne at the Club Tropicana near Havana will get you into the rhythm of Cuba

yourgetaways

See Castro's crazy Cuba while there's still time

■ BY CORDELIA O'NEILL

IT'S a sweltering evening and through the darkness, musicians drum an intoxicating salsa rhythm.

Tall palm trees seemingly swing in time as I sip my glass of seven-year-old rum and prepare for a night to remember.

Suddenly the spotlight swings to the two stages, and a flock of girls – the so-called Diosas de Carne, Goddesses of the Flesh – descend from trees in time to the music.

The music picks up, lights flash on sequined and feathered costumes, and the Club Tropicana kicks off another long Havana night.

Launched in 1939 at the Villa Mina, a sprawling six-acre estate on the outskirts of the city, this floor show inspired copycat cabaret in Paris, Las Vegas and New York, and has drawn countless tourists to Cuba's capital for nights of decadence, drama and daiquiris.

Very little is new in Cuba – from Spanish colonial style townhouses to the classic American cars – Chevrolets, Buicks and Cadillacs.

One of the best places to view this irrepressible capital is from the top of the 137m high memorial to the island's patriot, Jose Marti.

A slow lift takes you to the top of the obelisk, topped with a statue of the poet, journalist and leader of the 1895 rebellion against Spanish rule.

Having paid my respects, I decide to worship the local culture in a slightly less worthy way, and slip into my gold bikini, don a pair of oversized sunglasses and make for the rooftop pool of my hotel – the neoclassical Saratoga.

FACT FILE: CUBA

Time difference	- Five hours (GMT)
Capital	Havana
Language	Spanish
Population	11,300,000
Currency	Cuban pesos



Cordelia O'Neill was a guest of Thomson Holidays (0871 231 5595 and thomson.co.uk), which offers twin-centre 11-night stays on the resort of Guardalavaca and Havana from £1,876, including return flights with Thomson Airways to Holguin. Internal flights by Air Cubana.

With departures only ex-Gatwick and Manchester, the programme runs all year round.

Also worth seeing is the Hotel Nacional de Cuba – the flagship hotel and the hangout of Errol Flynn, Marlon Brando and novelist Ernest Hemingway in glitzy times.

One peculiarity of the country is the dual currency system: tourists use a convertible peso (introduced in 2005 to eradicate the US dollar) worth nearly 25 times more than the non-convertible peso for native Cubans.

Castro, whose rule was described by one guide as "like having a very strict father", is a looming presence.

More human aspects of revolutionary life are visible in his birthplace outside the tiny village of Biran, about 750km east of Havana.

Seven Castro siblings grew up here in a comfortably-off family. Castro's father Angel, an immigrant from Spain, owned a farm and expanded with a general store, telegraph room, school, hotel and mini

cock-fighting stadium.

Choose your souvenirs carefully. My favourite place to shop was Perfumeria Habana 1791 – a vintage-style perfumery where trainees mix a scent using notes including citrus, jasmine, rose, lavender and tobacco.

If you want cigars, don't buy a box on street corners, lest they are rolled-up banana leaves, and keep receipts for customs officials.

But Havana is only a part of Cuba's heritage. For a traditional Caribbean break, we headed for Cayo Saetia, off Guardalavaca.

In Cuba, a sea-change is coming. Since Fidel Castro handed over to his brother in 2006, the island has opened itself to the West, and President Obama's election could end the ban on visitors from the US.

Enjoy this crazy, contradictory country before too many Americans arrive.

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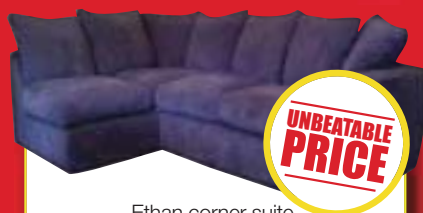
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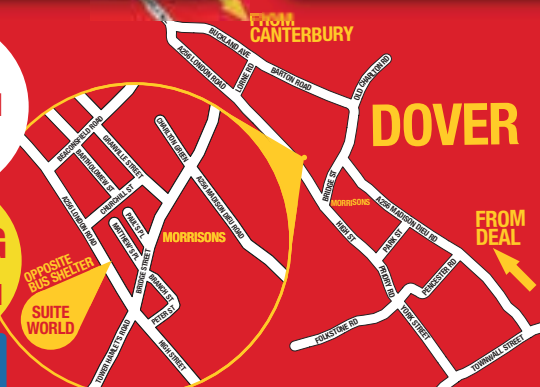


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MOTORS NEWS



Focus is all about style for the third generation

FORD has produced a dramatic third generation Focus after criticism that the current version betrayed the innovative styling of the original.

A sporty five-door hatchback will be the mainstay of the new range, due early next year, but there is also a classy estate.

The newcomer is touted as a true 'world car' for Ford, rather than a specifically European one, and features a high quality interior in line with Ford's intention to move upmarket in search of profitability and image rather than volume.



Kia bring their 'Mondeo masher' to the sector

AMBITIOUS Kia intends to muscle in on the crowded 'D segment' or Mondeo sector of the motor market with a striking all-new model – the Optima.

If looks are anything to go by, this will be a classy upgrade from the woeful Magentis with which the Korean marque hoped and failed to gain a foothold in this arena.

The newcomer also has an eye on the tax bill faced by 'company car man' – it will use low emission economic drivetrains. It arrives in mid to late 2011.



Baby Mazda's upgrade

MAZDA has upgraded its clever and smart little three and five-door Mazda2 supermini just three years after launch.

There are cosmetic changes on the outside, but it is enhanced cabin quality and feel that is most welcome; in the search for an eco-friendly lightweight design, one felt that too many corners were cut with the interior, but that has been righted.

Powertrains have also been upgraded to comply with tougher EU emissions regulations and Mazda says bodyshell and suspension updates provide more comfort and smoothness.



STILL GOING STRONG: VW's Golf Blue Motion is the German carmaker's green offering, but uses a conventional diesel engine and it just as effective as its various hybrid rivals

Green Golf showing that 'old' technology still lives

ROAD TEST GOLF BLUEMOTION

BY STEVE LOADER

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Green rating	★★★★★

range; it is a green car that can be driven with verve. Nor does the BlueMotion dither on bends due to poor grip from its energy-saving, low-rolling resistance tyres.

And there is magic elsewhere, notably from a smooth stop/start system that cuts and then automatically re-starts the engine when halted by traffic lights, a jam or other delay.

The engine is also burdened less by the alternator – energy normally lost through braking is recovered to top-up the battery.

Weight and wind resistance have been shaved too and this paragon of eco-motoring actually looks as mean as some sportier Golf models, while sharing their excellent refinement and an interior that is robust, classy and well-arranged without being ostentatious.

Admittedly, Golfs are not cheap and our five-door BlueMotion test car is £18,715 against £17,895 for the 'standard' 1.6 S diesel closest to it in the range.

That car will cost you £20 a year in road tax after year one of ownership and averages about 10mpg less than its green sister, but you can see from the above where that extra £800 or so has been spent – and it is a lower premium than you will see on some other eco rivals.



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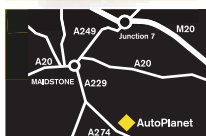
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08 Plate Skoda Fabia 1 1.2 HTP 6V (60 BHP) 5-Dr Hatchback

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54 Plate Skoda Fabia 1.2 HTP (54 BHP) Classic 5-Dr Hatchback

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2004 Volkswagen Touran 1.6 S (100BHP) 7-Seat

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159, 1.8 MPI TURISMO (750 MINIMUM PX ALLOWANCE), 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alarm fitted alloy wheels cd player central locking cruise control electric windows front fog lights full service history immobiliser metallic paint power fold mirrors multiple airbags power steering trip computer twin airbags remote central locking quickclear windscreen body coloured bumpers, black & red leather, 30061 miles, £8999, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

159, 2.4 JTDm LUSO, 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels cd player diesel electric windows immobiliser metallic paint power steering remote central locking remote audio controls, black, 28347 miles, £12000, Ashford, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

159, 2.4 JTDm LUSO, 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels cd player diesel electric windows immobiliser metallic paint power steering remote central locking remote audio controls, black, 28347 miles, £12000, Ashford, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

159, 1.8 MPI TURISMO (750 MINIMUM PX ALLOWANCE), 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alarm fitted alloy wheels cd player central locking cruise control electric windows front fog lights full service history immobiliser metallic paint power fold mirrors multiple airbags power steering trip computer twin airbags remote central locking quickclear windscreen body coloured bumpers, black & red leather, 30061 miles, £8999, Ashford, 0844 856 5918 (TRADE)

159, 2.4 JTDm LUSO, 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels cd player diesel electric windows immobiliser metallic paint power steering remote central locking remote audio controls, black, 28347 miles, £12000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

159, 1.8 MPI TURISMO (750 MINIMUM PX ALLOWANCE), 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alarm fitted alloy wheels cd player central locking cruise control electric windows front fog lights full service history immobiliser metallic paint power fold mirrors multiple airbags bumpers, black & red leather, 30061 miles, £8999, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

BRERA, 2.4 JTDm SV, 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels cd player cruise control diesel electric windows immobiliser metallic paint leather interior multiple airbags power steering trip computer remote central locking remote audio controls, silver, 28347 miles, £14000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

BRERA, 2.4 JTDm SV, 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels cd player cruise control diesel electric windows immobiliser metallic paint leather interior multiple airbags power steering trip computer remote central locking remote audio controls, silver, 28347 miles, £14000, Ashford, 0844 856 5918 (TRADE)

BRERA, 2.4 JTDm SV, 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels cd player cruise control diesel electric windows immobiliser metallic paint leather interior multiple airbags power steering trip computer remote central locking remote audio controls, silver, 28347 miles, £14000, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

GT, Jtdm 16v Bertone Blackline, g577hm, air con, climate control, full leather, cd player, mp3 player, radio, steering wheel audio controls, cruise control, stability control, electric front windows, electric mirrors, abs, multiple airbags, anti-theft system, remote central locking, locking wheel nuts, centre armrest, height adjustable seat, adjustable 90800 miles, £8648, Maidstone, 01622 200 100 (TRADE)

CITROEN

C3 PICASSO, 2 registered keepers remote central locking electric windows electric mirrors abs air con climate control passenger airbag cruise control immobiliser alloy wheels rear parking sensors roof rails service history, obsidian black, 11000 miles, £10995, Ashford, 01233 640100 (TRADE)

C3 PLURIEL, remote central locking electric windows electric sunroof abs air con passenger airbag full leather interior alloy wheels service history, obsidian black, 4000 miles, £11495, Ashford, 01233 640100 (TRADE)

C4, 5, gk59ft0, 1 registered keeper franchise approved remote central locking electric windows electric mirrors abs traction control air conditioning drivers airbag passenger airbag power steering side airbags cruise control immobiliser alloy wheels bluetooth hands freekit, blue, 9000 miles, £11995, Folkestone, 01303 245 588 (TRADE)

C4, 5, gk10xwm, central locking remote central locking front electric windows abs air con passenger airbag cruise control immobiliser, silver, 4500 miles, £12895, Ashford, 01233 640100 (TRADE)

C4, 16V VTI SX, 2008, abs brakes air con alarm fitted alloys automatic cd player remote audio controls, grey metallic, 4000 miles, £9000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 16v, 2008, abs brakes alarm fitted cd player electric windows front fog lights heated seats multiple airbags, black, 55 miles, £20600, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 16v, 2008, central locking diesel electric windows multi cd player power fold mirrors, black, 8450 miles, £20000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 16v, 2008, abs brakes cd player central locking, black, 50 miles, £20500, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 2.0VRX AUTO, 2006, abs brakes alarm fitted alloy wheels cd player central locking climate control cruise control electric windows full service history metallic paint leather interior, blue, 20189 miles, £6500, Maidstone, 08448 759296 (TRADE)

C4, 16V SX (92), 2006, black, 88810 miles, £4699, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 1.6, 2008, black, 50 miles, £19000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 1.6, 2008, blue, 50 miles, £19000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 1.6, 2008, black, 50 miles, £19000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 16V SX, 2009, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels cd player central locking cruise control drivers airbag electric windows immobiliser multiple airbags power steering, black, 1500 miles, £11000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 16V VTR Plus, 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels cd player cruise control electric windows front fog lights immobiliser metallic paint power fold mirrors multiple airbags power controls, grey metallic, 6000 miles, £7000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, vtr plus, 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels automatic transmission cd player central locking diesel drivers airbag electric windows steering remote central locking, blue, 44000 miles, £8500, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 16v, 2008, black, 50 miles, £20500, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 16v, 2008, black, 55 miles, £20480, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 16v, 2008, blue, 55 miles, £20600, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 16v, 2008, red, 55 miles, £20500, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 1.6, 2008, black, 50 miles, £20000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 1.6, 2008, black, 50 miles, £19000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 1.6, 2008, black, 50 miles, £19000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, VTR Plus, 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alarm fitted alloy wheels controls, red metallic, 23000 miles, £7500, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, Cool, 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels cd player cruise control electric windows front fog lights multiple airbags sports seats trip computer remote central locking isofix child seat points remote audio controls, grey, 11400 miles, £7000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 1.6 Hdi 110hp VTR Plus, 2005, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels bluetooth car kit cd player climate control diesel electric windows front fog lights immobiliser metallic paint power steering trip computer front passenger air bag deactivation switch remote central locking isofix child seat points auto headlights and wipers remote audio controls adjustable steering column heated door mirrors height adj drivers seat, gold, 65000 miles, £5500, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 1.6i 16V SX 5dr Auto Hatch, ly07azc, pas, abs, air conditioning, remote central locking, front electric windows, front fog lights, alloy wheels, radio/cd, trip computer, cruise control, side airbags, electricdoor mirrors, steering wheel rake adjustment, drivers airbag, body coloured bumpers, 3x3 point rear seat belts, full size spare wheel, height adjustable drivers seat, service indicator, audio remote control, front head restraints, cloth seat trim, immobiliser, rear wiper, rear headrests, isofix child seat anchor points, folding rear seats, grey, 26070 miles, £5995, Tunbridge Wells, 01892 549766 (TRADE)

C4, SX 16v 5dr, dk58zh, abs, air bag, immobiliser, central locking, remote central locking, air conditioning, cruise control, stereo, electric front windows, trip computer, cd player, electric mirrors, front fog lamps, automatic electric windows, radio, child locks, head restraints, cloth upholstery, isofix, 15" alloys, full size spare wheel, rev counter, height adjustable front seatbelts, illuminated glovebox, body colour door mirrors, front and rear door pockets, height adjustable front headrests, height adjustable headlamps, maintenance indicator, front seatbelt pretensioners with force limiters, variable pas, black panel night illumination, seatbelt warning lamp, oil level gauge, twin sunvisors and covered mirrors + map holder, "guide me home" headlamps, passenger underseat drawer, push/pull drawer under lateral and central air vents, drivers side dashboard storage, exterior temperature gauge, tinted windows, multi function steering wheel, split fold rear seat, rear wiper, comfort seats, pack look c4, scented air freshener, 16" radiale alloy wheels, door ajar/boot open warning, outer rear seatbelt force limiters, automatic activation of hazard warning lights, energy absorbing side impact protection, tilt/height adjustable steering wheel, automatic boot locking, boot storage compartments, auto re-lock after 30 secs (when using plug key), interior lights activated when doors unlocked, 3 rear 3 point seatbelts, courtesy light in boot, driver's seat height adjustment, black, 1800 miles, £9995, Bexleyheath, 01222 524 680 (TRADE)

C4, 16v VTR Plus, 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels cd player cruise control electric windows front fog lights immobiliser metallic paint power fold mirrors multiple airbags power controls, grey metallic, 6000 miles, £7000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 16V VTR Plus, 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels cd player cruise control electric windows front fog lights immobiliser metallic paint power fold mirrors multiple airbags power controls, grey metallic, 6000 miles, £7000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 16v, 2008, blue, 55 miles, £20600, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

C4, 16v, 2008, blue, 55 miles, £20600, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

C4, 1.6, 2008, black, 50 miles, £20000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 1.6, 2008, black, 50 miles, £19000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, 1.6, 2008, black, 50 miles, £19000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

C4, VTR Plus, 2007, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels cd player cruise control electric windows front fog lights immobiliser metallic paint power steering remote central locking, blue, 44000 miles, £8500, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

FIESTA, Style Climate Pack, 2008, abs brakes air con alloys electric windows immobiliser multiple airbags single cd player remote central locking, silver, 45075 miles, £5200, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 1.25 Style (Climate), 2008, abs brakes air con alloys electric windows immobiliser multiple airbags power steering single cd player remote central locking, blazer blue, 42254 miles, £6000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

FIESTA, Style Climate Pack, 2008, abs brakes air con alloys drivers airbag electric windows immobiliser multiple airbags single cd player remote central locking, panther black, 44621 miles, £5200, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 1.25 Zetec, 2009, abs brakes electric windows immobiliser multiple airbags power steering single cd player remote central locking, silver, 29081 miles, £9000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 1.4 TDCI STYLE (1000 MINIMUM PART EXCHANGE), 2007, abs brakes air con alarm fitted cd player central locking full service history immobiliser metallic paint remote central locking multi functional tuneport (i-pod and mp3 connection), blue, 51458 miles, £6999, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

FIESTA, Style (Climate), 2008, air con cd player central locking electric windows immobiliser power steering, black, 11186 miles, £7500, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

FIESTA, Zetec (Climate), 2008, abs brakes air conditioning alloy wheels drivers airbag electric windows immobiliser multiple airbags power steering single cd player remote central locking, black, 20500 miles, £6000, Canterbury, 0844 856 4494 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 1.6 TDCI TITANIUM (minimum 1500 PX ALLOWANCE), 2008, abs brakes air conditioning alarm fitted alloy wheels cd player central locking diesel electric panther black, 19643 miles, £11499, Ramsgate, 0844 856 4496 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 1.6 Titanium TDCi, 2010, abs brakes air conditioning alarm fitted alloy wheels bluetooth car kit cd player cruise control diesel drivers airbag electric windows front fog lights immobiliser metallic paint power steering reverse parking aid traction control trip computer twin airbags curtain airbags front parking remote audio controls, hot magenta, 1806 miles, £13000, Ashford, 0844 826 5918 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 5, ea02vzp, insurance group 6 alloy wheels body coloured bumpers central locking drivers airbag folding rear seats front electric windows front fog lights height adjustable drivers seat immobiliser power steering radio/cd trip computer 2 owners, state blue, 57000 miles, £2183, Crayford, 01322 281525 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 5, pe03thq, insurance group 5 abs air conditioning alarm alloy wheels audio remote control body coloured bumpers drivers airbag electricdoor mirrors folding rear seats front electric windows front fog lights rake adjustment trip computer 2 owners history, metropolis blue, 28000 miles, £4000, Crayford, 01322 281525 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 5, ra57hgm, insurance group 4 abs air conditioning alloy wheels body coloured bumpers drivers airbag electricdoor mirrors folding rear seats front electric windows front fog lights heated door mirrors height adjustable drivers seat immobiliser passenger airbag power steering radio/cd remote central locking trip computer 1 owner history, tango red, 28000 miles, £5483, Crayford, 01322 281525 (TRADE)

FIESTA, Style Climate 16v 3dr, 8046079, air conditioning, power steering, cd player, radio, rear wash/wipe, rear headrests, remote central locking, remote alarm, electric front windows, electric mirrors, height adjustable seat, adjustable steering column, abs, twin air bags, this is just one of seven fiesta's that we are currently offering for sale. please click on the link to our web site to view our current stock. all our vehicles are inspected in our workshop and are prepared to the highest standard. silver, 42900 miles, £4995, Plumstead, 020 8855 4000 (TRADE)

FIESTA, Style 16v 5dr, 8047079, air conditioning, power steering, remote central locking, remote alarm, electric front windows, rear wash/wipe, rear headrests, height adjustable seat, cloth upholstery, adjustable steering column, cd player, radio, twin air bags, abs, this is just one of seven fiesta's that we are currently offering for sale. please click on the link to our web site to view our current stock. all our vehicles are inspected in our workshop and are prepared to the highest standard. silver, 52100 miles, £4695, Plumstead, 020 8855 4000 (TRADE)

FIESTA, Finesse 16v 3dr, 7965079, power steering, abs, twin air bags, central locking, rear wash/wipe, rear headrests, height adjustable seat, adjustable steering column, cd player, radio, this is just one of seven fiesta's that we are currently offering for sale. please click on the link to our web site to view our current stock. all our vehicles are inspected in our workshop and are prepared to the highest standard. silver, 48000 miles, £3995, Plumstead, 020 8855 4000 (TRADE)

FIESTA, Finesse 16v 3dr, 8072079, power steering, abs, twin air bags, cd player, radio, cloth upholstery, rear wash/wipe, rear headrests, height adjustable seat, this is just one of seven fiesta's that we are currently offering for sale. please click on the link to our web site to view our current stock. all our vehicles are inspected in our workshop and are prepared to the highest standard. silver, 31100 miles, £3995, Plumstead, 020 8855 4000 (TRADE)

FIESTA, Finesse 16v 5dr, 8098079, power steering, cd player, radio, twin air bags, central locking, cloth upholstery, rear wash/wipe, rear headrests, height adjustable seat, adjustable steering column, this is just one of seven fiesta's that we are currently offering for sale. please click on the link to our web site to view our current stock. all our vehicles are inspected in our workshop and are prepared to the highest standard. silver, 54700 miles, £3995, Plumstead, 020 8855 4000 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 1.25 Style + 3dr [82], 35827163, abs, air bag, immobiliser, central locking, remote central locking, power steering, air conditioning, electric front windows, cd player, adjustable steering column, rear headrests, automatic electric windows, radio, folding rear seats, cloth upholstery, isofix, air conditioning, head restraints, height adjustable seat, retractable headrests, multi-function steering wheel, quick-clear screen, side air door mirrors, delay courtesy light heated windscreen, 3 point rear 36123 miles, £7299, Maidstone, 0845 871 5185 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 1.25 Style Plus 5dr, 35774163, abs, air bag, immobiliser, central locking, remote central locking, power steering, air conditioning, electric front windows, cd player, adjustable steering column, rear headrests, automatic electric windows, radio, folding rear seats, cloth upholstery, isofix, air conditioning, head restraints, height adjustable seat, retractable headrests, trip computer, quick-clear screen, side air bags, twin air bags, pocket, delay courtesy light function, 3 point rear seatbelts x3, auxiliary mirrors, green, 11840 miles, £8800, Maidstone, 0845 871 5185 (TRADE)

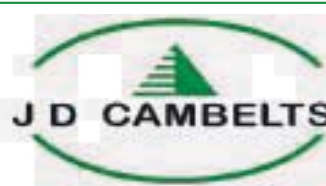
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PROPERTY NEWS

Older homeowners facing big repair bills

MORE than a third of Britain's homeowners aged over 50 say their homes are in need of repair, but more than one in seven are unable to pay for them.

According to research from Saga Personal Finance, women in particular are suffering, with one in five forced to allow their homes to deteriorate.

In London, 42 per cent of older homeowners need housing repairs.

The poll of more than 14,000 over 50s identified roof, drainage and guttering problems as the main areas of concern.

When asked how they might pay for housing maintenance, half of those questioned planned to use their savings and only a third expected to finance the work from their regular income.

Less than one per cent said they would ask family or a friend for help.

Saga executive chairman, Andrew Goodsell, said: "People are living longer which means that retirement incomes have to stretch a lot further.

"For many, equity release is the ideal solution, but until now the market has not listened to people's needs and providers insist on charging hefty fees."

Repossession fears as budget cuts loom

A LEADING credit rating agency has warned that Government cuts and tax increases could result in a rise in repossessions across the UK housing market.

According to Standard & Poor's, the house price crash did not bring the average cost of a home in line with household incomes, and measures yet to be implemented by the coalition government could test some mortgage borrowers.

In recent years, UK lenders have been exercising forbearance over mortgage arrears, keeping repossessions below estimates, but S&P has noted that Britain has a "high percentage" of sub-prime borrowers in arrears, and suggests that job losses or a jump in interest rates could cause a rise in repossessions.

The firm's report follows a recent warning from the Consumer Credit Counselling Service.

Recently the national charity revealed that it has on its books a number of clients with suspended repossession orders, lenders having not yet enforced orders, despite borrowers failing to meet repayments ordered by the courts.

However, the CCCS suggests that a hardening of attitudes by banks and building societies could lead to a rise in repossessions in 2011.



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Detached homes lead way against recession

■ BY NICK AMES

DESPITE the current uncertainty in the market there has been good news recently for one particular set of homeowners

The average price of a detached family home has risen by more than any other property type over the past year.

According to new research from Halifax, owners of detached properties saw the value of their homes increase by £91 a day over the year to the end of June, with a 13 per cent leap taking the average value of a stand-alone property to £299,295.

By comparison, prices for all other property types rose by just eight to nine per cent over the period.

However, going back over the past decade, semi-detached homeowners have been the biggest winners, with the cost of the typical semi surging ahead by 111 per cent since 2000.

For terraced homeowners, growth stood at 110 per cent and for bungalow dwellers, 109 per cent.

Flats were the only property type not to double in value, with an 81 per cent average increase over the last 10 years.

Halifax housing economist, Suren Thiru, comments: "The changing pattern of homes bought over the past decade highlights some significant socio-economic forces.

"For example, the rise in the proportion of sales of flats and terraced homes reflects the increasing trend for people to live alone."

While married households remain the most common form of UK home, single person properties are projected to take the lead by 2020, according to a Communities and Local Government forecast.

The news comes amidst fears that the prices of property across the UK could fall again, after a few months of consolidation.



GOOD INVESTMENT: Detached family homes are increasing in value faster than any other type, say analysts

But analysts say there are very different values and prices across the country, with the worst decline in value in the north and outlying regions.

Kent and London continue to avoid the

worst of the recession, but recent figures suggest they are not immune to the national downturn. However the increasing number of properties on the market is giving buyers a better choice.

Fall in prices 'good news for sales'

SURVEYORS say they are feeling less optimistic about UK house prices, with more respondents to the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors' (RICS) latest survey expecting prices to fall, rather than rise, over the next three months.

However, RICS spokesman, Jeremy Leaf, points out that while prices in many parts of the country may be slipping, sales levels could begin to pick up as a result.

Mr Leaf said: "Looking forward, our price

indicators are telling a mixed story, which is consistent with the uncertainty hanging over the economy, the low level of interest rates and the lack of new house building."

Separately, the Council of Mortgage Lenders (CML) reported that there were only 56,000 house purchase loans approved in July, as loans to first-time buyers declined to 19,400, down from 19,700 in June and from 20,100 in the same period of 2009.

The first-time buyer share of the market fell

to 34 per cent, its lowest level since the credit crisis began in August 2007.

The CML suggests that loan criteria have now "tightened a little", having eased in the early part of the year, with the typical first-time putting down a deposit of 24 per cent in July, up from 21 per cent in April and May.

However, low interest rates mean that for those getting a foot on the property ladder, interest payments are at their most affordable since early 2004.

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- Lounge

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Property of the Week



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Mr Sykes, Minster



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- Dining Room
- Garage And Osp



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- Garage
- 200m To Sea Front



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- Charm And Character
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- Central Heating



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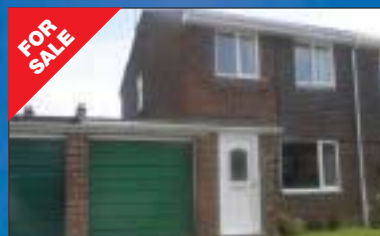
Ramsgate £149,995

Terraced House, Three Beds, Immaculate Throughout, Original Character Features, Popular Location, Enclosed Garden, Close To All Amenities



Ramsgate £159,995

3 Bedroom, Semi Detached House, Conservatory, Garage, Off Street Parking, Rear Garden, Superb Location, Close To Local Amenities



Birchington £167,500

Semi Detached House, Two Beds, Cul-De-Sac, Two Receptions, Gardens, Garage Plus Driveway, Close To Local Amenities, Within School Catchments



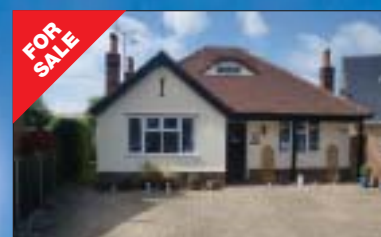
Margate £170,000

Detached Bungalow, Corner Plot, Two Bedrooms, Convenient Location, No Onwards Chain, Off Street Parking, Close To QEOM, Gardens To Front & Rear



Cliffsend £179,995

End Terrace House, Three Beds, Modern Style, Desirable Location, Garage Plus Driveway, Southerly Facing Garden, Immaculate Throughout, Viewing Highly Recommended



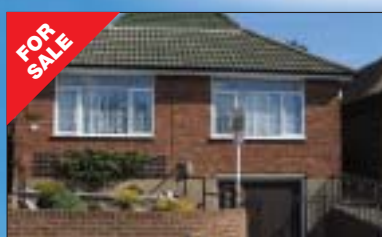
Westwood £215,000

Detached Chalet Bungalow, Corner Plot, Three Beds, Kitchen/Breakfast Room, Off Street Parking, 40ft x 40ft Garden, En Suite Bathroom, Popular Location, Viewing Essential



Broadstairs £239,995

Detached House, Four Beds, Within School Catchments, Garage Plus Driveway, Southerly Facing Garden, No Onwards Chain, Popular Location, Viewing Recommended



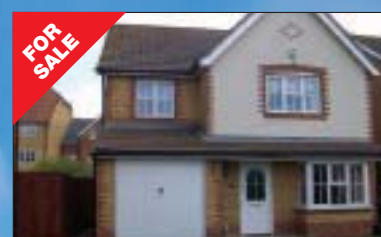
Broadstairs £242,500

Detached Bungalow, Two Double Beds, Lounge/Dining Room, Spacious Kitchen, Garage Plus Driveway, Landscaped Gardens Conservatory



Margate £249,995

Detached Former Stables, Four Beds, Garage Plus Driveway, Bathroom + Shower Room, Immaculately Presented, Separate Garden Plot, Conservatory



Ramsgate £249,995

Detached House, Sought After Location, En Suite Facility, Integral Garage No Onwards Chain, Four Bedrooms, Two Reception Rooms, Close To Railway Station



Cliftonville £260,000

SIZE MATTERS, 5 Bedrooms, Detached house, 3 Large Reception Rooms, 70FT Rear Garden, Off Street Parking, Close to local Amenities



Cliftonville £275,000

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Palm Bay £385,000

Detached Chalet Bungalow, Four Beds, Versatile, Immaculate Throughout, En Suite Facilities, Two Garages, Beautiful Gardens, Corner Plot, Highly Desirable Location



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WESTBROOK



- Terraced house
- Lounge
- Dining Room
- Downstairs Cloakroom

£159,950

MARGATE



- Purpose built flat
- Requires refurbishment
- En suite shower room
- Gas central heating

£39,950

GARLINGE



- End terrace house
- Good decorative order
- Lounge
- Dining Room

£119,995

RAMSGATE



- Semi detached house
- Good decorative order
- Local amenities
- Gas central heating

£150,000 OIEO

RAMSGATE



- Detached bungalow
- Two bedrooms
- Two reception rooms
- Fully double glazed

£194,950

MARGATE



- Terraced house
- Good decorative order
- Local amenities
- One reception room

£144,995

CLIFTONVILLE



- Converted flat
- In need of modernisation
- Local amenities
- Economy 7 heating

£36,000

PUBLIC NOTICE

MARGATE
Property Address:
16c Hereward House, Gordon Road,
Cliftonville, Margate, Kent.
We advise that an offer has been made for
the above property in the sum of £44,000.
Any persons wishing to increase on this offer
should notify the agents of their best offer
prior to exchange of contracts.
Agents Address:
Milton Ashbury, 122 Northdown Road,
Cliftonville, Margate, Kent CT9 2RB
Agents Telephone
Number: 01843 225533

RAMSGATE



- Viewing Highly Recommended
- 3 Beds, 2 Receptions
- D/g, Gch, 16' Kitchen
- Local Amenities

£138,500

RAMSGATE



- Investment
- Good decorative order
- Local amenities
- Viewing highly recommended

£99,995

CLIFTONVILLE



- One bedroom top floor flat
- Impeccable décor throughout
- Ideal First Time Buy
- Call for an appointment to view

£59,950

CLIFTONVILLE



- Terraced house
- Two bedrooms
- Immaculate Condition
- Double Glazed Conservatory

£115,000

RAMSGATE



- Internal inspection recommended
- Investment
- 2 x 2 Bed Apartments
- 1 x Studio Apartment

£185,000

RAMSGATE



- No Forward Chain
- 3 Beds, Mostly D/g
- n Need of Modernisation
- Popular Location

£134,995

RAMSGATE



- Converted flat
- Good decorative order
- Sea Views
- Gas central heating

£129,950

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room and WC on the first floor and two reception rooms,
conservatory, breakfast room, a fitted kitchen, utility room
and a WC all on the ground floor. The property also
benefits from having double glazing, central heating, a
107ft long rear garden with a heated swimming pool plus
changing room, a garage and off street parking.

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— Charterhouse —

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- Semi detached • Drive
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- Three bedroom house
- Two doubles and a single
- Large garden
- Drive • Stripped floor boards
- Fitted kitchen
- Lounge and diner
- View today!!

CLIFTONVILLE

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- One bedroom flat
- Split over two levels
- Recently refurbished
- Close to sea Fitted kitchen
- Large lounge
- Night storage heaters
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- One Bedroom flat
- On the 7th floor • Direct sea views
- Allocated parking
- Recently refurbished
- White goods inc
- Security entrance
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MARGATE

£425PCM



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- Two bedroom flat
- One double one single
- Own entrance
- Large lounge • Central heating
- Recently refurbished
- View soon!!

WESTGATE

£395PCM



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- One bedroom flat
- Large Balcony
- Fitted kitchen
- Central heating
- Allocated parking
- Lift • Sea views
- View soon!!

MARGATE

£525PCM



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- Two bedroom flat
- Lower ground floor
- Own entrance Parking space
- Courtyard garden
- Double glazing/Central heating
- En-Suite to master
- View today!!

MARGATE

£525PCM



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- 2 bedroom flat
- In Margate old town
- Ground floor
- Split level Large lounge
- Central heating
- Double glazing
- View today!!

MARGATE

£295PCM



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- Bed-sit
- Fourth floor Double glazing
- Electric heating
- New Kitchen
- Close to town centre
- Views over Margate
- View today!!

MARGATE

£550PCM



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- Two bedroom
- White goods
- Large balcony
- Lift En-suite
- Electric heating
- Double glazing
- View today!!

MARGATE

£450PCM



cliftonville@your-move.co.uk 01843 291777

- One bedroom flat
- On the 2nd floor
- Lift
- Allocated parking
- Electric heating
- Double glazing Balcony
- View today!!

MARGATE

£425PCM



cliftonville@your-move.co.uk 01843 291777

- Two bedroom flat
- One double one single
- Sea Views
- Fitted kitchen
- Security entrance
- Parking 18th floor
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Senior & General Appointments 46-48

Purchasing and Stock Control Person

We are currently looking to recruit an experienced Purchasing and Stock Control Processor here at our busy factory in Ramsgate.

The successful candidate would need to have good communication and I.T skills, work accurately at all times, be able to meet deadlines and work well as part of a team.

If you feel you have the experience to meet our needs, please apply to Ray Kemp, Piper Double Glazing Limited, 140 Newington Road, Ramsgate, Kent, CT12 6PP or e-mail ray.kemp@piperwindows.co.uk.

Closing date for applications is Friday 15 October 2010, no agencies.

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8am-5pm Mon-Fri
Must be computer literate and experience in the Care Industry preferable
Also looking for **DOMESTIC STAFF**
Please contact Maralyn or Amanda on 01227 721527

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Send detailed cv to saudipipes@gmail.com. Do not send by attachment.

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requires a DEPUTY MATRON/ MANAGER

To join our team in caring for adults with a physical disability. Applicants will be a first level registered nurse and will be required to undergo a CRB check

For more information and an application form please tel: **01303 872289**

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Westgate College for Deaf People
Community Living Services
Monkshill Farm

Registered Nurse

Due to expansion and development we now need to recruit a registered nurse to join our friendly team based in Margate.

The role is full time during school term time on Nursing pay band 5 and may suit a newly qualified nurse or a nurse returning to work.

If you're enthusiastic, motivated and serious about working with our special children and young people then we want to hear from you.

We are committed to equal opportunities and diversity and welcome applicants from all groups and communities.

All positions are subject to an Enhanced CRB Disclosure check, satisfactory references, proof of qualifications and a fully checkable work history.

Closing date: **9th October 2010**

For application packs please contact Human Resources Department

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email: hr@royalschoolfordeaf.kent.sch.uk

Or download an application form from our website: www.townsendtrust.org



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Nacro is the principal crime reduction charity in England and Wales. It works to reduce crime by delivering a range of socially inclusive crime prevention initiatives by working for a fair and effective criminal justice system and by resettling offenders.

Nacro Services in Kent and Medway offers vocational and skills training to young people aged 14-19 years / adult learners and those who wish to improve their literacy and numeracy. Our aim is to motivate raise self-esteem and increase self confidence through effective training and skills development to progress our learners into education, training or employment.

As our provision extends we are looking for lively, self motivated individuals who enjoy the challenge of working with people of all ages but, in particular, young people.

ADMINISTRATOR

Nacro requires a competent and efficient administrator to work within a busy training environment at our Pathways Construction Training Centre in Chatham.

You will have excellent communication skills, be highly motivated and be able to plan and prioritise your workload. You must be qualified or experienced to a minimum of NVQ level 2 (or equivalent) and have a sound knowledge of all major aspects of office administration. Knowledge of office-based IT packages including spreadsheets, databases and word processing programmes is essential. Some book-keeping or finance knowledge and an understanding of HR would also be beneficial.

£17,834.00 p.a (subject to job evaluation)

Closing date is the 15 October with interviews on 19 October.

Contact Colin.farrow@nacro.org.uk or call Colin Farrow on 01634 818305 for an application pack.



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KOS Media is looking for a leisure and features writer to work across all its titles, including Kent on Saturday, Kent on Sunday, Tunbridge Wells on Saturday, Tunbridge Wells on Sunday, Review and the Midweek series of newspapers.

You must be able to write in a clear and attractive fashion, cope with a demanding workload and have a genuine and wide-ranging interest in leisure, style and entertainment.

You would be based at our offices in Smeeth.

Apply with your CV and a covering letter to:
Ian Patel, Editorial Director,
Apple Barn,
Smeeth,
Kent TN25 6SS
Email: ian.patel@kosmedia.co.uk



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The Nevill Crest and Gun near Tunbridge Wells is a beautiful old building that has now come under the wing of Brunning and Price, and we're embarking on an extensive renovation scheme to bring it back on song. With good luck we hope to re-open in December.

You may already know the Hare in Langton Green that we have operated for 22 years, and have more recently opened the White Hart in Sevenoaks. Our pub restaurants are traditional in style, with decent old furniture and open fires, and we serve simple, high quality fresh food.

Below are some of the positions we're looking for right now, but we'll also be recruiting for gardeners, cleaners, kitchen porters and front of house staff:

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Lecturer in Electrical Installation

Ref: P0357

Salary: £28,463 - £32,251 per annum (dependant on qualifications and experience) Medway

We are looking to recruit an enthusiastic individual to deliver Electrical Installation to learners studying from level 1 to level 3. The successful candidate will contribute to the development, delivery and teaching of Electrical Installation programmes. The ideal candidate must have a current knowledge and practical experience of the Building Services Industry, have sufficient teaching experience and educated to Level 3 or the equivalent in the relevant field. The successful candidate must have; an Advanced Craft Certificate, including Inspection and testing of Installations and possess either a D32/34 or A & V Awards and hold a recognised teaching qualification or be willing to work towards one. Good IT skills and the ability to work within a team are essential.

Lecturer in Child Care

Ref: P0070

18.5 hours per week. Fixed term Maternity cover

Lecturer in Child Care and Health and Social Care

Ref: P0232

Salary: £24,096 - £28,963 per annum/pro rata (dependent on qualifications and experience) Medway

We are looking for knowledgeable and experienced candidates to deliver CACHE Child Care programmes at various levels. The successful candidates will have the ability to motivate students and be flexible and adaptable in their teaching methods. The applicants must have a relevant vocational/academic qualification and have, or be willing to work towards, a teaching qualification. Recent industry experience would be advantageous.

CLOSING DATE: Friday 15 October 2010

MidKent College is working in partnership with RBLI Employment Solutions to support individuals who have a disability or health condition in the application, interview and employment with the college. If you would like any further information regarding RBLI, or require assistance with your application process then please contact RBLI on 0800 783 1144 or visit their website www.rbli.co.uk for information, advice and guidance.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure.

Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the HR department on 01634 383102 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.

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Bradstow School

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TEAM SUPPORT WORKERS - CHILDCARE

£13,874 plus 10% per annum - 41 hours per week, (including weekends) - Term time only, plus 2 weeks* & £4,994 - 15 hours per week, (weekends only) - Term time only, plus 2 weeks*

As part of the childcare team, these roles involve providing care and support to students from classrooms to childcare rooms afternoons and evenings during the week and late or early shifts each weekend.

CHILDCARE SUPPORT ASSISTANTS

£10,079 plus 10% per annum - 16.5 hours per week, (including weekends) - Term time only, plus 2 weeks*

As part of the childcare team, these roles involve providing care and support to students mornings, evenings and weekends.

LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANTS (TEAM SUPPORT WORKERS - EDUCATION)

£12,689 per annum - 37.5 hours per week, 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. (from childcare rooms into classrooms) Mon-Fri - Term time only, plus 2 weeks*

The successful applicants will be responsible for assisting teachers in the school.

*For these roles there will also be up to a maximum of two weeks for the school's respite care provision if required, for which extra payment would be paid.

For all posts we look for candidates who are mature, practical, flexible and responsible with a patient and caring attitude to deal sensitively with vulnerable children.

We are committed to sustainability and preserving the environment and therefore encourage applications by email, so for an application form and information pack please email personnel@bradstow.wandsworth.sch.uk Or you may call 01843 608727 (24 hour recruitment answer machine).

Please note that CVs will not be considered.

The closing date for all applications is 12 noon Friday 15th October 2010.



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Are you Sport mad?

Commercial Sales Manager (Sports Product)

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Candidates will possess a proven track record in media sales, combining excellent communication and presentation skills, a great business acumen, tenacity, and the ability to build positive business relationships.

Ultimately, we need an articulate and assured sales person with a structured sales technique, a positive manner and passion for all things sport.

Have you got innovative ideas?

Media Sales Executives

We have an opportunity for highly motivated people to create and sell multi-media solutions in our market-leading portfolio of newspapers and magazines.

We're not looking for people to just take orders; we're looking for people who can provide first class solutions for our customers.

We believe good customer service is at the heart of our success and we want to recruit people who can develop excellent business relationships and present effective and innovative ideas that will provide real value and response for our customers.

About us

KOS Media publishes the UK award-winning Kent on Sunday newspaper and a series of free weekly newspapers, magazines and associated websites and mobile products.

The company produces kentnews.co.uk and yourkentTV, an internet-based TV service providing regional and local news, business and sport, plus websites for jobs, property and motors.

KOS Media's newspapers have won more than 10 national awards, including UK Regional Newspaper of the Year, and UK Free Weekly Newspaper of the Year six times.

In June, 2010, media group Archant purchased KOS Media.

Archant is the UK's largest independently owned regional media business

It is a community media company active in the fields of regional newspaper and magazine publishing, contract printing and internet communications. All its titles serve clearly defined communities, based around locations or interest groups.

Archant can trace its roots back more than 160 years and today remains one of the country's largest independent media businesses. As a private company it employs 1,850 people right across England. It has an annual turnover of £142 million.

The newspaper division, Archant Regional, produces four daily regional newspapers and around 60 weekly titles with a combined circulation of 2.25 million copies every week. It is a UK top six regional newspaper publisher. It also publishes many of the group's 180 websites and a number of its magazines.

Archant also owns three magazine companies, which between them produce around 80 magazines.

We offer an excellent basic salary plus generous bonus scheme, ongoing training and career development, five weeks' annual leave, contributory pension and life assurance scheme (after qualifying period) and all the benefits of working for a large media organisation.

To apply send your CV with covering letter to:

Jason Pyne, Development Director
KOS Media, Apple Barn,
Hythe Road, Smeeth, Ashford,
Kent TN25 6SS.

Or by email:
jason.pyne@kosmedia.co.uk



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Picture DINE STEWART



SLOW START: Thanet's Neil Wakefield (blue, centre)

Wanderers lose their way after interval

Sutton & Epsom 30 Thanet Wanderers 12

RUGBY

THANET Wanderers have slipped to second-bottom in London 1 South after suffering a heavy defeat at the hands of fellow strugglers Sutton & Epsom.

The home side started the day propping up the division but made Wanderers look very much second-best in all departments and picked up a late bonus point to rub salt in the Thanet wound.

Richard Eldridge, returning from injury, kicked four penalties for the visitors but they were unable to create many clear-cut

try-scoring opportunities. Only three points separated the sides at half-time but Sutton romped clear after the interval and Saturday's trip to Cobham now assumes even greater importance for Thanet.

The Surrey side, like Wanderers, have won only once in five outings and Tom Carlier's side can scarcely afford another defeat if they are to stop themselves being cast adrift with the relegation battlers.

Thanet skipper Neil Wakefield said: "We

were confident we could get a result and they didn't seem that great, but obviously we need to look at ourselves and try a little bit harder. It was pretty even-stevens at half-time but we didn't show up, didn't use our possession and lost a game we thought we could have won.

"We've always been a team that hasn't travelled well, so we want to make [home ground] St Peter's a horrible place for people to come and play at.

"We always get off to a slow start and we've had tough fixtures against London Irish, Beckenham and Dover."

FOOTBALL

O'Connell annoyed by defensive lapses

DEFEAT at Sutton United left Margate manager Iain O'Connell with mixed feelings after watching his side match the hosts before letting the game slip away.



SLOPPY: Iain O'Connell

The Blues' league defeats this season have come against the Ryman Premier's top three sides but O'Connell took little consolation from the fact and insisted Margate can only afford two more losses if they are to secure automatic promotion.

He said: "The two goals we conceded came from sloppy defending, which was annoying because the boys gave 100 per cent all game. We deserved a point out of the game, without a doubt.

"We're disappointed with the result but most people were pleased with the way we played.

"We've lost three times now, which I don't like, because you can only lose five games at most if you want to go up.

"Obviously, we were limited up front because we had two strikers out."

O'Connell expects Ishmail Kamara to be fit for Saturday's game against Horsham but James Pinnock is struggling with a groin injury and could be a longer-term absentee.

FOOTBALL

Live and kicking playing the field

KENT Football Live returns this weekend and is your chance to follow your side's progress as the season really begins to heat up.

Featured games this weekend are Gillingham v Stockport County and Canvey Island v Dartford.

But don't worry, if you're not a fan of these Kent sides, we'll still bring you goals from games involving our sides, as well as half-time and full-time scores.

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Blues brought back down to earth by league leaders

FOOTBALL

■ BY YOURTHANET REPORTER

Sutton United 2

Hammond 46, Davis 77

Margate 1

Grant 68



MARGATE'S three-game winning run came to an end at Sutton United as the Ryman Premier leaders struck twice in the second-half to knock the Blues down to 12th.

The visitors were hampered by the absence of Ishmail Kamara and James Pinnock, although James Rogers came in for his debut after signing from Dover Athletic.

Blues boss Iain O'Connell altered his formation as a result, with Shaun Welford playing the lone striker's role at the head of a 5-4-1 system.

Both sides looked to pass the ball from the first whistle but there was little in the way of goalmouth action until Aaron Lacy's long throw was headed wide by Welford.

With Rogers playing an increasingly pivotal role in the Gate midfield, the visitors looked the more likely scorers before the break but when another Lacy throw caused panic in the box, Marsden fluffed his lines from close range.

Jamie Turner was finally called into action late in the half as Sutton started to come alive, before Laurence Ball headed wide at the other end for O'Connell's side.

The Blues were made to rue their missed opportunities just a minute into the second period when a loose ball forward was flicked over John Keister and into the path of debutant Elvis Hammond, who slotted the ball beyond Turner.

Sutton were now well on top, passing the ball with confidence, and went close to making it 2-0 when Tom Davis curled an effort just past the post.

Margate started to gain a foothold in the game, though, and from the third Wayne Wilson free-kick in quick succession, Ball's header floated over the bar.

The introduction of Dean Grant for Keister saw Margate adopt a more attacking 4-4-2 formation and O'Connell's substitution appeared inspired when Grant grabbed the equaliser soon after.

Welford collected the ball out wide and played a pass across the box to Grant, whose shot took a wicked deflection before nestling in the back



Picture IOR KUPCO

MY BALL: But Margate midfielder Jay Saunders saw his side's three-game winning run halted by Sutton United

of the Sutton net. Having restored parity, Gate went in search of a winner but it was Sutton who scored next when Davis was set up by Richard Jolly before placing his shot into the bottom left-hand corner.

Still Margate were not finished, but Marsden and Cloke failed to hit the target before Kevin Scriven produced a fine stop to thwart Welford.

Margate, who entertain Horsham on Saturday, were at home to Kent rivals Tonbridge Angels last night.

For details of that game, log on to www.yourthanet.co.uk.

Margate starting XI



Subs used: Subs: Grant (Keister 56); Cloke (Wilson 80)

Ramsgate players must step up, says Lawson

FOOTBALL

■ BY STEVE TERVET

RAMSGATE'S under-performing players should start to take responsibility for the club's poor start to the Ryman South season, according to chairman Richard Lawson.

While the ire of Rams fans has been directed largely at manager Jim Ward in recent weeks, Lawson says the finger of blame should be pointed at those on the field.

The Southwood chief backed Ward to get Ramsgate's promotion hopes back on track and insisted no-one could do a better job than the experienced Scot, despite the club's lowly position.

Lawson said: "We've had a disappointing start and it's baffling, really, because you look at the players we've got and the position we're in and it shouldn't be.

"I'm experienced enough to know that people will blame the management but I think sometimes the players have to look at themselves if they're not giving everything.

"What you have to do is decide whether, by changing the manager, you're going to improve the club and I don't think it would.

"There are no outstanding young candi-



EXPERIENCE: Ramsgate manager Jim Ward

dates banging on the door saying, 'I'm the next messiah', and what we've got is very

good. We're all very aware of the pressure on the club because it's not performing, but I think we're only a couple of results from turning the corner."

Ramsgate's strong pre-season form has so far not transferred into the league, where Ward's side have only won twice from nine outings.

The individual quality on show at Southwood is undoubted, but having seen the Rams already beaten by several of the division's lesser lights, Lawson questioned the application being shown by the players.

He said: "We drew against the team at the top of the league [Leatherhead] but we've been losing against teams at the bottom and that's been happening for two or three years.

"It shows the lads can lift themselves against the big teams, but they need to lift themselves every week. It drives you round the twist, it really does, and I can't believe how it happens with the quality we've got.

"It's the fans I feel sorry for because we've got everything in place, the players, the infrastructure, but it's just not happening."

Ramsgate had no game on Saturday, having been originally drawn away to Ashford Town in the FA Trophy, although Lawson confirmed they would pick up the £2,000 prize money.

He said: "You always go into the season thinking you'll get through two or three rounds and then kick yourselves when you go out in the first round, but you can't budget on something you can't guarantee."

Life's a Beech after Rams show their fighting spirit

FOOTBALL

CONSISTENCY is the key for Ramsgate as they travel to Fleet Town on Saturday looking to replicate the form which earned them a 3-3 draw at Leatherhead.

The Rams twice found themselves behind against the much-fancied Tanners last Tuesday but fought back in style to grab a stoppage-time equaliser courtesy of Aaron Beech's spectacular strike.

Sherwood and Beech had earlier overturned a 1-0 deficit to put the visitors in front, but the balance of power swung Leatherhead's way once more before Beech intervened to level the scores.

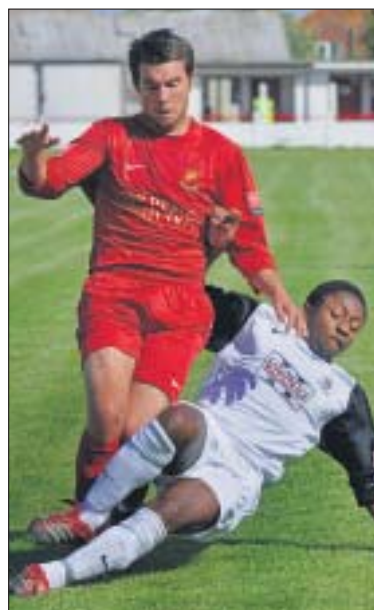
Assistant manager Richard Langley praised the renewed zest among the Ramsgate players, but accepted they would be judged on a string of results rather than individual games.

"We're not consistent enough so we need to address that," he said. "The players showed a lot more desire and passion than they have lately. Jim [Ward] and I chatted to them individually and as a group so maybe that worked.

"For the management, stood on the touchline, it's probably a good job we didn't have heart monitors on.

"It was an outstanding game, end-to-end and [Leatherhead] deserve to be where they are, but we stuck at it."

Brett Mills, Ramsgate's fourth goalkeeper of the season, was named man of the match for his performance at Leatherhead and is likely to keep the number one jersey



Picture: DAVE STEWART

SPECTACULAR: Ramsgate's Aaron Beech (red) struck a superb equaliser against Leatherhead

until Danny Twyman returns from injury.

The Rams, who did not play on Saturday, will travel to Arlesley Town in the FA Trophy first qualifying round on October 16 after the Bedfordshire side beat Sittingbourne 2-0 on Saturday.

HOCKEY



Picture: IOR KUPCO

THIRD GOAL: Dan McGrath (red) of Cliftonville

New kids on the block Ville turn on the style

Maidstone 2nd XI 1 Cliftonville 1st XI 4

CLIFTONVILLE men's 1st XI started the new Kent Division 1 season in style with an opening day triumph at Maidstone 2nd.

The game was Ville's first in the division after gaining promotion last season and they showed little sign of apprehension as they outclassed their opponents.

Rob Macer finished a move started by James Perks to give the visitors an early lead. A second goal followed shortly afterwards, when Perks deflected Matt Westby's shot into the net. Cliftonville dominated possession and added a third goal just before the break from Dan McGrath. The second half followed a similar pattern with the away side firmly in control. Ville soon secured the points when Macer grabbed his second goal of the afternoon, this time from close range.

Maidstone managed to pull a consolation goal back late on. Cliftonville hope to continue their impressive start to the season when they host Belvedere & Bexleyheath on Saturday.

The ladies' 1st XI were unable to follow in the men's footsteps with a 3-0 defeat against Old Williamsons in the Kent Premier League. Ville were guilty of missing chances early in the first half but were only 1-0 down at the break. However, Williamsons were clinical on the counter in the second half and put the game beyond reach with two well-taken goals.

LEAGUE TABLES

(not including midweek games)

RYMAN PREMIER DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
1 Sutton United	8	7	1	0	+10	22
2 Lowestoft Town	9	7	0	2	+9	21
3 Kingstonsian	9	6	1	2	+6	19
4 Bury Town	9	5	3	1	+3	18
5 Hendon	9	5	2	2	+8	17
6 Carshalton Athletic	8	5	1	2	+8	16
7 Hastings United	9	4	2	3	+3	14
8 Billericay Town	9	4	2	3	+1	14
9 Cray Wanderers	8	3	3	2	+9	12
10 Canvey Island	9	3	3	3	+3	12
11 Concord Rangers	9	3	3	3	0	12
12 Margate	8	3	2	3	+1	11
13 Tonbridge Angels	9	3	1	5	-1	10
14 Harrow Borough	9	3	1	5	-5	10
15 Tooting & Mitcham	8	3	1	4	-6	10
16 AFC Hornchurch	9	2	3	4	-10	9
17 Wealdstone	9	2	1	6	-4	7
18 Croydon Athletic	6	2	1	3	-6	7
19 Folkestone Invicta	9	1	4	4	-6	7
20 Aveley	9	1	3	5	-6	6
21 Maidstone United	9	1	2	6	-8	5
22 Horsham	9	1	2	6	-9	5

RYMAN DIVISION ONE SOUTH

1 Metropolitan Police	8	8	0	0	+24	24
2 Leatherhead	10	7	2	1	+11	23
3 Bognor Regis Town	8	5	2	1	+8	17
4 Dulwich Hamlet	9	5	1	3	+5	16
5 Godalming Town	9	5	1	3	+5	16
6 Sittingbourne	9	4	3	2	+5	15
7 Burgess Hill Town	8	4	3	1	+1	15
8 Walton Casuals	9	4	1	4	+1	13
9 Eastbourne Town	9	3	4	2	-2	13
10 Whitehawk	8	3	3	2	+8	12
11 Chatham Town	9	4	0	5	-5	12
12 Faversham Town	9	3	2	4	-2	11
13 Merstham	10	2	5	3	-3	11
14 Worthing	8	2	3	3	+3	9
15 Chipstead	7	2	3	2	-1	9
16 Whitstable Town	8	2	2	4	-3	8
17 Ramsgate	9	2	2	5	-4	8
18 Whyteleafe	8	2	2	4	-7	8
19 Fleet Town	7	2	1	4	-6	7
20 Horsham YMCA	9	2	1	6	-11	7
21 Walton & Hersham	8	1	1	6	-7	4
22 Corinthian-Casuals	9	0	2	7	-10	2

FIXTURES: (Saturday): Ryman Premier: Margate v Horsham; Ryman South: Fleet Town v Ramsgate

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ON TARGET: CBeebies star Sid Sloane will don his tights for the lead role of Robin

CBeebies Sid's a real hotshot

HE may be the coolest presenter on TV, but Sid Sloane is proving hot property.

The energetic host of the BBC TV children's channel CBeebies will play Robin Hood in this year's show and is already causing quite a stir.

Panto producer Paul Hendy and his promotions team have been out and about at various events across Kent over the last few months – and Sid has been the main talking point.

Paul said: "Sid is one of the most popular presenters on TV and we are really lucky to have him.

"My five-year-old son loves him – and it seems lots of other children (and their mums) do, too."

Sid, who describes himself as "positive, spiritually-minded and ambitious", is tall, loves football and is deadly on the dance-floor.

He reveals more in this exclusive KOS Media question-and-answer session:

• MOST EXCITING THING ABOUT BEING IN PANTO: It will be great to be on stage, working hard and sharing the good vibes with the audience and

cast, but also very exciting to work with a fabulous production company on a panto that I've never seen performed before.

• INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOUR BIRTH YEAR: The last two digits of the year backwards are the single digits which make up the day and the month.

• NEAREST AND DEAREST: Mum, dad, three brothers, one sister, my son, my fiancée, my nephews and my niece, my gran and my cousins all over the world.

• OCCUPATION: Actor/writer/presenter.

• BEST PART OF YOUR JOB: The people I work with and get to work with all the time. They really care.

• FAVOURITE CBEBBIES MOMENTS: Filming in Africa: Kenya in 2008, and South Africa back in May this year.

In South Africa we were at a game reserve and in Kenya we went all around the Masai Mara.

Seeing the elephants and giraffes was the most magical, but there was one moment when I was recording a link from the Range Rover with the elephants crossing in front of me and the camera

at a safe distance in another vehicle behind when suddenly one elephant turned and gave me the look of all looks as if to say "Get any closer and you can kiss goodbye to your friends".

• DREADLOCKS, FRIEND OR FOE?

Good one! Friend – in the way that your best friends can be the most annoying, but that's one reason you love them, because you know they'll come good in the end. You trust them.

• ONE PIECE OF ADVICE TO THE 16-YEAR-OLD YOU: Focus.

• HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO NOTTINGHAM? Yes, I performed at the Playhouse there in a touring production of The Twits for the Belgrade Theatre Company nine years ago – I stayed in an area called The Park and had a great time.

I didn't buy any lace, but I did watch Liverpool win the UEFA Cup to complete a cup treble in a pub very near the theatre. And I once got turned off the motorway due to snow on the way up to Sheffield, and we ended up in Nottingham for several hours.

Your chance to own the famous ghost gag bench

ITS ACTING may be the most wooden you're likely to see, but over the last 15 years the ghost gag bench has developed something of a cult status.

The bench has become one of the most highly-anticipated points of the panto: on it comes and you just know what's going to follow.

Unfortunately, it is going into retirement... but fear not – as Dave Lee would say – it's going to be replaced and a new one will get to see its relatives in Sherwood Forest.

However, rather than put the old version on the bonfire, one KOS Media reader can win it.

Dave is the man (or woman) most associated with the bench and is sorry to see the original one go.

He said: "From the very first time I sat on it, I knew it was something very special. Most of the leading ladies have asked to sit on the bench in the wings – apparently it gives eternal youth and stops your feet aching after three shows on a Saturday.

"These lovely leading ladies include Martine McCutcheon, Toyah Willcox, Daniella Westbrook, Shelia Ferguson, Emma Barton, Barbara Sturgeon and many, many more splendid bottoms, plus a thousand and one dancers.

"Many a man has had to endure the most frightening experience of a lifetime, sitting in the dark with 2,000 gleaming eyes watching and waiting for ghostly figures to appear; only to hear a frightening scream cause one of these brave characters to run off into the wings and back to their dressing room.

"Once they reach the safety of the room all they can hear is the tribal chanting of 'Well, we'll have to sing it again then, won't we, whoooooops!'"

Dave added: "Some of the male thespians who have braved the magical seat of danger are Brian Blessed, Peter Duncan, Shaun Williamson, Dave Willets, Lewis Collins, Tim Vincent, Colin Baker and Stephen Mulhern.

"Actors have travelled from the other side of the world for the honour to sit on that piece of English timber.

"From Ramsay Street, Daniel McPherson, Ryan Moloney and Blair McDonough have all contacted me to say this experience has changed their lives forever – and, may I say, mine as well."

• For your chance to win the bench, simply answer the following question:

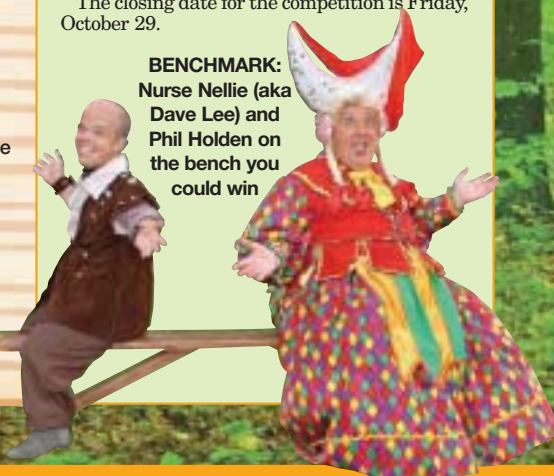
• For 15 years, Dave has sung the same song during the ghost gag routine. What is the name of the song?

As well as the bench, the winner will receive four tickets to the 7pm performance of Robin Hood on Wednesday, December 8.

Send your entry to: Sarah Munday, Marlowe Theatre, C/O VIC, 12-13 Sun Street, Canterbury CT1 2HX. Please include your name and a daytime phone number.

The closing date for the competition is Friday, October 29.

BENCHMARK: Nurse Nellie (aka Dave Lee) and Phil Holden on the bench you could win



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